



Bridging the Divide

Spring 2017





Letter from the Editors

Dear Readers,

It is with great pleasure that we present the Spring 2017 edition of OneWorld to Saint Louis University and the St. Louis community. This election year has shaken our country's populous with a new set of challenges that affect not only our citizens but those of the world. Yet, in the midst of both great joy and despair, in moments of unity and stark division, OneWorld's mission remains the same: "to rediscover that, while we are many in our cultures, religions, and struggles, we are one in our common humanity."

Our theme this semester, "Bridging the Divide," encouraged our staff to return close to home in order to discover and connect with the fringes of our campus and local community. In the heat of national political battles, it is easy to forget the rifts we observe and experience everyday among our peers, acquaintances and fellow community members. Our articles this semester investigate the nature of the divisions that society has created and propagated — of race, nationality, sexual orientation, creed, and ability status among many. We seek to ask questions but also explore solutions to isolation, ostracization and discomfort in all its forms in order to achieve unity within our campus and community.

OneWorld is not simply a magazine but a call to action. We hope that these stories transform you as much as they did us. We hope that they inspire you to question, research and get involved so that we can better recognize the worth in all of our neighbors, despite the injustices in society.

"We yearn to remove the barriers of ignorance and injustice, because the most basic and unchanging truth that unites us is the infinite value of the human person."

liveOneWorld,
The Editorial Board

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THE GREEN TEAM:

When Dirt Lovers and Tree Huggers Unite



Maddie Baumgart
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To many environmentalists, the rural Midwest seems more of America's basket case than its Breadbasket. The area's allegiance to the industrial agriculture system and consequent reluctance to adopt new environmental regulations renders it a preservationist's adversary, the large brushstroke of red on a map growing greener every year.

When we speak about this pushback against environmentalism, the least inflammatory among us often blame the prevailing dissent on "misinformation." With more information, the idea goes, agriculturists will come to see the light. Of course, when they are not swayed—and we can no longer blame ignorance—we resort to vilifying them as apathetic or greedy.

Those hailing from an agrarian lifestyle easily read the implications: they are uninformed. To farmers—those that live at the whim of the environment, who work both with and against nature, whose livelihood and families and histories are tied up with a plot of land—this assumption proves especially stinging.

Logan Mainord, an East Prairie, MO resident who splits his time between studying English at Southeast Missouri State University and working at MRM Farms, has felt this sentiment acutely. Mainord said, "Perhaps the most damaging but least voiced myth is that farmers care little for the environment and destroy it for our own gain. On the contrary, farmers are among the most caring for the environment. Where many voice concerns that a pesticide or a GMO designed to kill insects might kill vital pollinators like butterflies and bees, the fact is that farmers know the criticality of such pollinators and would refrain from using anything that could damage them unless absolutely necessary."

The key lies embedded in those final two words: absolutely necessary. Rather than resulting from a lack of information, often times economic forces demand that agriculturists rely on potentially hazardous fertilizers. Because the market is artificially depressed in order to keep food prices low and supply constant, seeds and equipment actually cost more than farmers can sell their crops for. In order to minimize their losses through government programs, farmers must churn the highest yield possible per acre.

Furthermore, many agriculturists believe the "misinformation" charge swings both ways. GMOs provide a classic example. Though little evidence exists to stand testament to their nefarious nature, they're still defamed on everything from Panera advertisements to cereal boxes.

Mainord believes that some of the accusations launched at agriculture practices operate similarly.



"Perhaps the most damaging but least voiced *Myth* is that farmers care little for the environment and destroy it for our own gain."

"As far as the EPA is concerned, much of their interference is oftentimes pointed at things that—while problems that can be helped in other industries or that make sense out of context—make zero sense in context," Mainord said. "Things like regulating the release of ammonia when the ammonia itself is filtered out of the sky, and will eventually return anyway either from evaporating out of the soil or from being released when a crop is harvested."

Other times, it's not misinformation but rather very different perceptions of the environment that are to blame for clashes in opinion. Mainord claims that the general population often has a much more passive relationship to the environment than do farmers.

"They [non-agriculturists] may choose to do more environmentally

friendly things such as putting up solar panels or working to be more energy efficient but most of these actions have no actual direct affect on their lives in the short term. On the other hand, farmers oftentimes see both a long term effect on their crops (certain practices can exacerbate or mitigate disasters like droughts and floods years down the line) and a direct effect, such as certain pesticides causing a bee die out causing low yields. Most of the environmental decisions are behind the scenes, like choosing which fields to grow which crops in and which fields to leave fallow," Mainord said.

Because of their proximity, farmers are much more apt to view the environment in immediate, concrete terms. In this way, appeals to long-term and fairly abstract phenomena—like climate change—may not enact the desired affect. If you have a car that you rely on for daily transportation, you're going to be more concerned about running out of gas on the way home than your car's depreciating value.

That is not to say that issues like climate change should not be addressed. However, we need must tie these concerns to current threats and take into account complexities that surpass simple ignorance or resistance. When trying to build policy that gets everyone on board, we might have to appeal to a wide array of motivations.

Alex Patino, a St. Louis resident who constructs plans to help corporations transition to more sustainable practices, said, "In many cases, rural areas are actually using environmentally friendly practices, like energy co-ops, out of necessity. Now, it may not be because climate change, it might be because the big energy companies refused to reach them or because this is more economically feasible. But the fact remains that they've been putting this into practice, and that 'progressive areas' can actually take cues from them."

We need to reframe our approach to discussing environmentalism to consider the actual reasons employed by those in opposition. Certainly it is in no one's best interest, least of all farmer's, to wreak havoc on the planet. In addition, through their profession, they have clearly accumulated a cache of knowledge. Therefore, their resistance to certain environmental reforms cannot be grounded in apathy or ignorance. When we approach these conversations with genuine intent to learn and understand, we can devise environmental initiatives that appeal to all.



Appeal to Rhetoric



Brian Dugan
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When Donald Trump won the 2016 election, his trademark smirk made its way across the electoral map of the middle of the United States. For years, the heartland called out the popular media for “coastal and elite bias,” but the media flayed the accusations. So, the citizens making up the teeth of Trump’s smile turned to alternative news sources. By Jan. 20, these alternative news sources had made their way to the White House as springs of truth for a populace lost to the assumptions of major media outlets.

Soon enough, the alternative news sources began proclaiming alternative facts. They’d set out to give a voice to the disenchanted, and by the time of Trump’s America, they’d amplified the voices of the alt-right. All news, as we’ve known it, is fake. Facts, as they reveal themselves, have a flipside. These tidbits come from the White House itself.

Alternative facts are not a new concept.

The truth is not always easily accepted. For instance, take heliocentrism. It took generations to accept that the sun, not the earth, is our center. The resulting ambiguity of perceived truth leads to a handful of alternatives. Whichever authority you trust will likely determine which “alternative” to believe.

According to a post-election poll from Pew, Trump and Clinton voters received their primary news from different sources. The leading news source for Trump supporters was Fox News, which informed 40 percent of his voting base. Clinton’s followers leaned most heavily on CNN, MSNBC, NPR and the New York Times, which combined for 39 percent of them.

The implication is that Americans have a tendency to filter our news sources to those with similar biases as us. FOX News is famously right-wing, while CNN, MSNBC, NPR and the New York Times tend to have a liberal bias. These biases might affect the topics each outlet covers, as well as the spin they put on those topics. What Clinton’s supporters read and heard about her emails were not what Trump’s supporters were told. Fox News covered Trump’s rallies differently than CNN. Coverage is differential. The result is a tendency for individuals and movements to cherry-pick their “facts.” By late January of this past year, even the new White House could be found in the cherry grove.

Maybe news sources are quick to cast aside a prudent pursuit for truth because it is boring. The concept of refugees who might be pawns of terrorists are more noteworthy to news networks than refugees who assimilate to life here, even if the former cannot be substantiated. The executive who cares enough about the middle class to intentionally decimate it is more entertaining than the one who simply wants to earn more money to support his family. Or perhaps the truth conflicts with a personal identity, and we gather alternative “truths” to protect that identity.

At SLU, this issue became readily apparent when Allen West’s September 2016 visit stirred up intense debate and clever protests. It touched on another extra-political divide, namely one of religious tolerance versus reactionism, but it largely polarized liberal and conservative students further than ever from each other and became a point of division for those with emotional mindsets and those with logical ones.

A February editorial in the University News, which has since been retracted, shone the spotlight on this division again. The editorial, entitled “Gender and Sexual Identification: Right and Wrong?,” posed questions about the fluidity of sexual orientation and made references to a sexual spectrum that began with homosexuality and extended to bestiality. Much controversy ensued from this comparison, and the reactions generally fell among two poles: emotional disgust and logic-based questioning. Blowback either accused the article of invalidating valid LGBTQ+ identities or else inquired to hear more about how such a thought process could exist.

Regardless of the effect that the U News editorial had, it highlighted and helped uncover an ancient division between emotion and reason, perhaps as salient as the liberal-conservative ideological battle. Can truth exist only in one or the other? Or must the two concepts be mutually exclusive?

Rhetoric, as it is often understood in our society, implies a tool that favors emotion over reason. However, as SLU assistant professor and professional rhetorician Paul Lynch argues, rhetoric is connected to the spectrum of reason and emotion but occupies its own dimension. Within an argument, each person’s understanding of fact is colored by their background, which inevitably has an emotional ties—whether those ties are positive or negative depends on the person.

When it comes to our political climate, it is easy to spot the defensiveness in many who feel that their ideologies—and, by extension, their identities—are under attack by premises that

they do not accept. The implication is that, in addition to reason, we must account for the emotions of an audience. Rhetoric, by definition, has a purpose, or an argument; it also has an audience to which to pitch this argument. Although reason is a good jumping-off point, addressing an audience with reason alone is insufficient.

As an example, let's return to the 2016 election. It's been said that Clinton ran on a platform of reason, while Trump preyed on the emotions of a large swath of the United States. Ultimately, although Clinton won the popular vote, Trump won the electoral vote. But this result was not the triumph of rhetoric over reason, Lynch argues, because neither really used rhetoric at all. Whereas Clinton faced accusations of discounting the real emotions of many of Trump's supporters, Trump mongered fear without regard for fact, such as that most recent terrorism in the United States (post-9/11) is domestic, not foreign.

"[Something] revealing about human beings is that we are made up of more than the sum of propositions we hold," Lynch says. "And we could lament that, or we could try to start to talk our way through it." In contrast to Lynch, Saint Louis University philosophy professor Scott Berman prefers that we do away with the subjectivity of emotion in our arguments. The presence of emotion at all in rhetoric can inhibit acceptance of an objective truth, the argument goes. This point of view does not disregard the differences between individuals, though. Berman recognizes that to convince a person of logic, one-on-one conversations must establish each side's starting point. But in this discussion, the audience does not have as significant of a role as in rhetorical debate.

Berman is a consequentialist. For him, then, the consequences of an action determine that action's value, and if those consequences are good, then the action must be good. Truth stems from this value.

Take Berman's favorite example of this concept, a stick in water. "When you put a stick in water, it looks bent," Berman said. "In objective reality, it's not bent. But it looks bent. So how do we arrive at objective truth? If something is objectively true, it will have various consequences that will tell us if we're right or wrong. So if I think that the stick is bent, then that's going to have certain consequences." One such consequence might be for a hunter who believes that the stick literally bends when it goes into water. Without correction, he will not catch the fish, and he will go hungry. The consequences are bad, because they stem from a fallacy. With the truth, he would be able to adjust for his

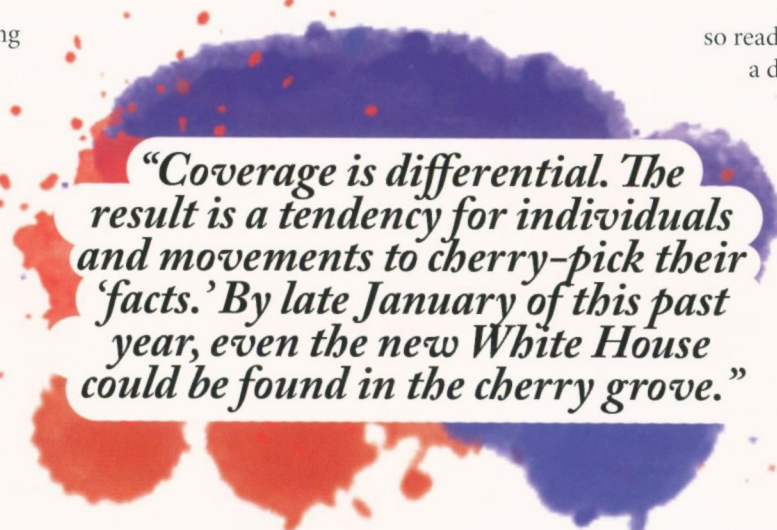
subjective error and still catch the fish. His subjective understanding or emotion does not matter if he cannot find truth.

In contrast, Lynch's pragmatism leads him toward a philosophy that is not so ready to dismiss the validity of subjective understanding in the pursuit of truth. To determine truth, we must consider the audience. But audience and ratings must not be mistaken for truth, as can happen with cable news.

"In a lot of ways you can teach rhetoric where the audience is a static thing, and once you figure out what they want, you can go from there," Lynch says. "And that's a start, but you can't end there. I think the issue is, what exactly is the conflict about?"

Consequentialism makes the argument that you can end there, though. If the hunter wants a fish, then teach him that he must adjust his understanding of the stick in order to use it correctly. The hunter has a new understanding, and he can move on. Lesson learned.

But reason is not always so readily accepted. People have a difficult time abandoning long-held beliefs, and they support their personal defenses of these beliefs with the psychological phenomenon of confirmation bias. This is the point where rhetoricians jump in and call for an appeal to emotion in addition to the necessary appeal to reason.



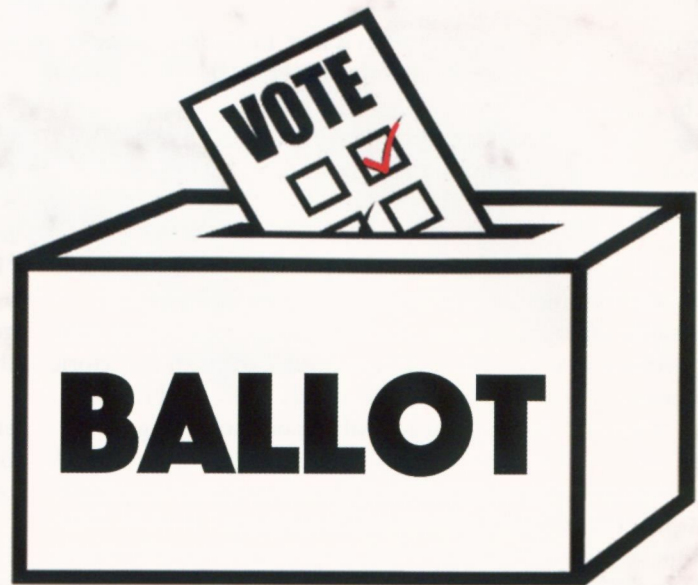
"Coverage is differential. The result is a tendency for individuals and movements to cherry-pick their 'facts.' By late January of this past year, even the new White House could be found in the cherry grove."

So, to bring this exploration back to our campus at Saint Louis University: how do we bridge gaps like the liberal-conservative one or the emotional-rational one? Whether the approach is consequentialist or rhetorical, the first step is clear: Listen. Listen to the students hurt by the U News editorial. To the faculty and staff recently laid off. To the students of color who have different lives on our campus than most of us. To your roommate. But also to the news we regularly dismiss. To the administrators. To every person. Help us facilitate a discussion that seeks a truth that will benefit all of us.

Right now, audiences often refuse to acknowledge each other without conflict. It might seem hopeless to get them to agree. But the intention of making others agree might be the inherent issue with our arguments. Echo chambers ensure that those who agree will find each other. Those who disagree, though, should be magnetized, not polarized. Perhaps a change is in order: to shift our goal from one of persuasion to one of comprehension.

When it comes to civil and productive discussion, Paul Lynch has advice: "The truth is necessary, but not sufficient."

BEHIND THE



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Senior
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Originally in place to expose the public's opinion on the presidential candidates, election polls have recently begun to uncover more about the voters themselves instead. These polls exist to shed light on important political issues, specific policy decisions and how a candidate is received by the public. Although election polls provide some degree of understanding of the public's sentiment toward the candidates, they do much more than that. They lend insight into stigma surrounding candidates and the social aspect of political viewpoints and expression. Dr. Jen Jen Chang, a professor of epidemiology at SLU and expert in study design was able to provide some perspective on the biases that affect the results of these polls.

"Think of the country as a big pie. A big pizza pie. And you try to get a slice of it and hopefully this slice is as representative as the rest of the pie, but you can see how challenging that is," Chang said.

Although there are measures in place to reduce bias, it is impossible to create a study that eliminates every form of study bias. Pew Research Center is an organization that conducts polling, research and data analysis that aims to inform professionals and the general public of the issues and attitudes that are shaping our country and our world. According to a study done by the Pew Research Center, election forecasters predicted that Clinton had between a 70 percent and 99 percent chance of winning the election. However, Trump won with 306 electoral votes, while Clinton had only 227.

Nonresponse bias, shy Trumper hypothesis and the identification of likely voters are the three most likely hypotheses identified by Pew Research Center that account for this great misjudgement of the election polls. First, the nonresponse bias theory states that those who respond to surveys are a very specific demographic. Essentially, the population of people who are more likely to vote for Trump are less likely

to respond to surveys; therefore, the surveys collect data on a fairly specific group of people who have similar characteristics or identities. These polls are not representative of the entire actual voting population. Next, the shy Trumper theory states that it is socially undesirable to vote for Trump. In a survey conducted by The Forum, a political journal of applied research, researchers found that 70 percent of respondents identified Trump as 'hard to like' and 69 percent described him as 'reckless.' Lastly, Pew believes that the pollsters may have misidentified likely voters. Before conducting a poll or survey, these samplers create models that aim to predict who is going to vote on Election Day based upon information gathered about these voters.

"The shy Trumper theory states that it is socially undesirable to vote for Trump... researchers found that 70 percent of respondents identified Trump as 'hard to like' and 69 percent described him as 'reckless.'"

Social desirability is the propensity of voters to respond to questions in a way that they believe will be met with approval from others.

"The media portrays the president in a certain way. Depending upon who you ask, some are not so willing to admit they support Trump," said Chang.

While some biases can be controlled in the collection of the sample by the surveyors, social desirability bias is one that cannot be affected by survey companies. It is a form of bias that is perpetuated by the political and social climate in which we live. In reference to a study done by Morning Consult, Chief Research Officer Kyle Dropp highlights differences in poll results according to how the data was collected. Donald Trump performed better in the online surveys in comparison to the telephone polls. A possible explanation is that, due to Trump's contentious candidacy, some voters find it socially unpopular to support him publicly. This study confirms the

effect that the comfort level of voters disclosing their political affiliations online as opposed to over the phone has on the polls. Trump's campaign manager, Kellyanne Conway said, "It's become socially desirable, especially if you're a college-educated person in the U.S., to say that you're against Donald Trump."

The political climate this election season was more toxic than it had ever been. The media's portrayal of the candidates and the social stigma surrounding the election permeated American society. In a study done by Pew Research, satisfaction with the two presidential candidates was the lowest it had been in over 20 years. Twenty-four percent of the population expressed disapproval of the candidates, which potentially contributed to the controversial polls. Additionally, Pew Research Center found that 56 percent of respondents reported that Trump had either "none at all" or "not too much" respect for Democratic institutions. This speaks volumes about the negative reputation surrounding Trump within our own society. Because both candidates were seen in a negative light by politically divided civilians, social desirability continues to be a viable source of bias.

Despite the fact that there is currently not enough research to confirm the effect of one or more of these hypotheses, these statistics point strongly toward social desirability bias. In May, the American Association for Public Opinion Research's ad hoc committee will report back with their study results after investigating the disparity between these polls and the election. We live in a society in which we grossly underestimate the support of one candidate due to societal pressure to dislike that candidate, which is extremely problematic. Going forward, we should strive to disagree with others in ways that do not degrade opinions that differ from our own.

There are many facets of data collection and information presentation over which we, as a collective community, have no control. Pollsters can perfect their techniques of identifying likely voters and work to control for nonresponse bias, but social desirability bias has the opportunity to be affected by the individuals in American society. We have the power to foster an environment that engages opposing political viewpoints rather than demeans them. It is important to seek justice through meaningful, challenging conversation rather than quelling ideas with which we do not agree. In that way, we can empower others to engage in meaningful discussions that serve to further affirm ourselves of our own beliefs and even expand our intellectual horizons.

"In a study done by Pew Research, satisfaction with the two presidential candidates was the **lowest** it had been in over 20 years. **24%** of the population expressed disapproval of the candidates."



What is Social Desirability Bias?

A response bias subcategory that is the tendency of respondents to answer survey questions in a way that they believe will be seen positively by others

CHALLENGING ADVERSITY TOGETHER



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"I want it to be abundantly clear that Saint Louis University supports our students, faculty, physicians, and staff from the affected countries and all who are immigrants, refugees, asylees or otherwise at risk; you are part of the SLU community. You are not alone. We stand with you. You make our University stronger."

Dr. Fred Pestello, the President of Saint Louis University, spoke these powerful words to address President Donald Trump's travel ban barring immigrants traveling to the United States from seven predominantly Muslim countries. Could it have been merely a coincidence that Dr. Pestello was in Washington D.C. at a Jesuit College Conference centered around the theme of "Inclusion on Campus: Exploring Diversity as an Expression of God's Grandeur?" Despair turned to hope as protests erupted throughout the United States challenging the travel ban. The ban was overturned and the immigrants living in the U.S. who were detained, returned to their families, work, studies and lives in America.

The refugee population is still subject to an extensive process for resettling in the U. S. that could take 18 to 24 months to complete. Islamophobia is a significant concern on our campus and in our nation. According to the Southern Poverty Law Center, during the week of the 2016 presidential election, there were 701 reported hate crime incidents across America. Sixty-five percent of these occurred in the three days following the election, and immigrants were targeted in almost half of these occurrences. In one month after the election, there were 1,094 reported bias related incidents. For the SLU community, Dr. Pestello's stance was firm: we would not and should not remain silent when fear morphs into hate.

Much of Islamophobia stems from a lack of understanding. Those who practice Islam base their belief in a singular God and the Prophet Muhammad. Religious leaders of other faiths consider Islam an inherently peaceful and reflective religion. Addressing the growing crisis surrounding Islamophobia, Pope Francis said:

"Christian terrorism does not exist, Jewish terrorism does not exist, and Muslim terrorism does not exist. They do not exist. There are fundamentalist and violent individuals in all peoples and religions—and with intolerant generalizations they

become stronger because they feed on hate and xenophobia." The extremist groups, which make up the vast minority, garner the most coverage in American news.

Practicing Muslims can be found on every continent, despite the common misconception that all Muslims live in the Middle East. The religion has its roots in the Middle East and North Africa, but those regions are home to only 20 percent of the Muslim population today. The majority of practicing Muslims live in Indonesia, India, Pakistan, Bangladesh, Iran and Turkey. Additionally, there are 2.75 million Muslims currently living in the U. S. The Islamic faith is quickly becoming one of the most globally prominent religions and is expected to surpass Christianity and Hinduism by the end of the century.

An awareness of the global impact Islam has is crucial to being an informed member of society, and we must be especially mindful of our Muslim peers at SLU. According to the data gathered from SLU's Office of Institutional Research for the 2016-2017 school year, there are 147 undergraduate students who identify as Muslim. 40 percent of the undergraduate population chose not to indicate their religious preference.

Maysa Daoud, a senior majoring in English and Legal Studies, is an executive board member for the Middle Eastern Student Association (MESA) and a member of the Muslim Student Association (MSA) at SLU. Daoud and her siblings were born in the U. S., and while her lineage originates in Palestine, both her paternal and maternal grandparents relocated to Lebanon as refugees following the Nakba in 1948. While Muslim women are given the choice to wear the hijab, Daoud has decided to make the commitment in the future. Daoud and her siblings did not face many issues in their younger years but as they got older, it became more apparent that her peers considered their religion and background "different."

"When I got to middle school, that's when it became very apparent to me," Daoud said. "I remember there were students who would make comments and jokes about terrorism. When I look back on this time, it's something that definitely stands out to me, not as a one-time experience, but ongoing." She remembers when she came to the realization that her family's safety could be compromised due to misconceptions about their way of life. In the wake of the terrorist attacks on September 11, 2001, Daoud's parents made the difficult decision to keep their fifth grade son from participating in his elementary school camping trip out of concern for his safety. For Daoud's family and many Muslim families across the United States, their background and religion influences how they live their everyday lives.

Although these hate-filled comments continued in high school, Daoud stated that she has had a generally positive experience at SLU. While this outlook is not indicative of the experience of all Muslim students at SLU, there have been efforts made by the faculty and staff to support the Muslim student population. Faculty and staff have spoken out against discriminatory events happening in the U. S. and at SLU. In September, former Lieutenant Colonel and Congressman Allen West was invited by the Young America's Foundation to speak at SLU. Daoud explains that this was one of the first times she and many of the other Muslim students felt unsafe on campus. "I remember the day because we were all sitting in the CGC [Center for Global Citizenship] and we were trying to figure out

what we were going to do. He would post these crazy blog posts and make connections between MSA and the Muslim Brotherhood (an international jihadist organization); it was just a scary time. And knowing that this was an event open to the public, we had no idea who was going to come into our university to sit and watch."

In his presentations at universities around the nation, West has made claims of connections between MSA and the the Muslim Brotherhood, citing the Brotherhood's document that lists Muslim student associations among 29 other organizations that could carry out the ideals of the Muslim Brotherhood. The Young America's Foundation, the group that sponsored the event at SLU, posted unapproved flyers citing the term "radical Islam." After these posters were removed from campus for using terminology offensive to our students to describe an on-campus organization, West accused the University of stifling his right to freedom of speech.

"An awareness of the global impact Islam has is crucial to being an informed member of society."

The MSA mission statement offers a different depiction of the purpose of the organization. It defines itself as, "an organization aimed at bringing together Muslims on campus through the common thread of their faith." Students of all religions and backgrounds have the opportunity to learn more about Islam and feel more connected and secure with their faith community. "With our ongoing commitment to the university's ideals as well as the Oath of Inclusion, we ask the entire SLU community to help support us in our cause to help spread the true meaning of Islam and to create a stronger and safer community at Saint Louis University," read the MSA statement in response to the Allen West event. It continued, "And we believe that this individual's presence does not reflect the commitment to civility and inclusiveness that Saint Louis University espouses."

Dr. Pestello faced criticism for allowing the event to occur in order to preserve the university's commitment to free speech, although Daoud felt support from her peers during this tumultuous time. Daoud was particularly impressed with the faculty in the Center for Global Citizenship, who frequently checked in on the members of MESA and MSA before and after the event. Administrators enlisted extra security measures in order to make sure those at the event would be safe. Students of different faiths organized a peaceful protest in which they wore white and walked out of the auditorium in silence as West began his speech.

While the protest was an inspiring display of solidarity, there is still work to be done. How can the SLU community continue to support and encourage its Muslim peers? The key to understanding is being informed. Engage with peers who may have unique perspectives, and join in events and dialogue. Feel empowered to correct stereotypes and uneducated statements made by peers that you hear around campus. Additionally, Daoud would like to see the University make a stronger effort to elevate the voices of students in MESA and MSA. Daoud suggested that the first steps should be tolerance and awareness. The students of SLU are called to go beyond merely understanding; we are called to create an environment of acceptance and appreciation for all and bridge the divides we encounter on our campus.

**"Keep ancient lands,
your storied pomp!"**

cries she with silent lips.

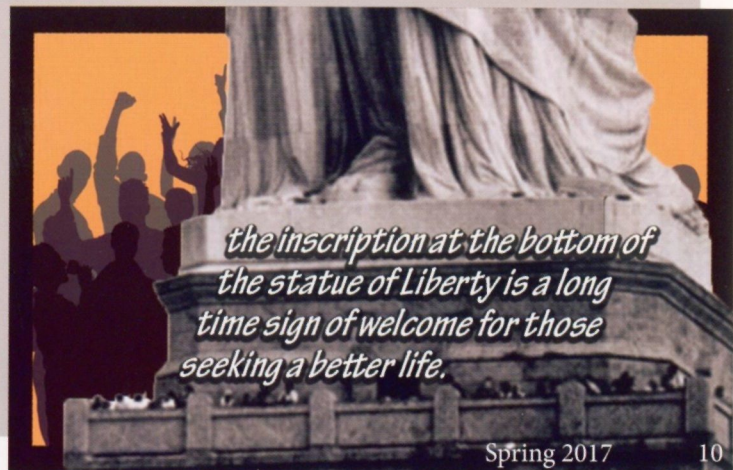
**"Give me your tired,
your poor, your huddled
masses yearning to
breathe free,
the wretched
refuge of
your teeming
shore."**



**"Send these, the homeless,
tempest-tossed to me,
I lift my lamp
beside the
golden door!"**



*the inscription at the bottom of
the statue of Liberty is a long
time sign of welcome for those
seeking a better life.*



NATIONAL DEBATE, LOCAL WELCOME:

Response to Refugees in the United States



Maria Walawender
Senior
Public Health

Refugees. Immigrants. Displacement. Mentioning any of these words today is sure to spark conversation, and few topics are more divisive or contentious. Much of the debate is led by politicians on a national level. Strong opinions and policies on both sides of the aisle seem to be deepening the divide. However, a closer look at the context of the current global situation reveals a disconnect between U.S. citizens and their political leaders.

Today, the world is facing the greatest refugee crisis since World War II. To genuinely engage this issue, it is crucial to first understand that refugees hail from all corners of the globe. The global refugee crisis is not synonymous with the Syrian refugee crisis. According to a recent New York Times article, the United States accepted 84,994 refugees in 2016; only 12,587 of them were from Syria. This article reported that over the last two years, the U.S. has welcomed the greatest number of refugees from Myanmar (formerly Burma), the Democratic Republic of the Congo, Iraq and Somalia. Though refugees often share a similar experience, it is inaccurate to group all displaced people together. Refugees arriving on U.S. soil bring distinct cultural practices and values, speak a variety of languages, practice different religions and come from a range of climates.

Thousands of people have been resettled to St. Louis over the last few decades. Though St. Louis is known as a common destination for Bosnians, the International Institute has welcomed people from Somalia, Vietnam, Bhutan, Eritrea, Nepal, Burundi and Myanmar. The International Institute is well-known for its work with immigrants and refugees; they offer resettlement, education, counseling and career services to

aid in an immigrant's transition to life in the U.S. The work of the International Institute is rooted in three pillars: immersion, investment and inclusion. Though the International Institute is the leading resettlement agency in the St. Louis area, there are several other organizations that offer a variety of support services to refugees in the community.

One such organization is Christian Friends of New Americans (CFNA), which works primarily with those who come to St. Louis through the International Institute. CFNA is a Lutheran nonprofit that offers health, job, social and spiritual programs and services to immigrants and refugees in the St. Louis area. Pastor Stanley Stanish is the Executive Director at CFNA. As a faith-based organization, CFNA relies on donations. With limited resources, Stanish and others work to make sure that they are using them wisely to meet the needs to those they serve.

They have recently seen influxes of people from Nepal, Syria, the Democratic Republic of the Congo, and Somalia. Stanish noted that there is a sense of fear among some of the people that come to CFNA about the recent executive orders. When asked specifically about how CFNA engages with the refugee community, Stanish said, "the first aspect is definitely to listen." He added, "every group brings with it their own uniqueness and differences, so to have people from within the community to establish that authenticity and relationship with them and then to be open to hear what the needs are is essential."

With the current structure of resettlement, refugees have only several months to learn the language, acclimate to American life and find employment. Stanish voiced his concerns about this timeline, and pointed out that there should be more assistance for refugees seeking jobs so, "that empowerment or that change...is made possible, it can be actualized."

Not everyone shares Stanish's desire to increase refugee assistance. Many people do not even want refugees to enter the U.S. On January 27, 2017, President Donald Trump signed "Protecting the Nation from Foreign Terrorist Entry into the United States," an executive order temporarily halting the entry of any refugees into the United States for 120 days. Syrian refugees were banned for an unspecified length of time. In addition, this executive order banned entry for citizens from seven Muslim nations with any kind of visas, including those visiting for business or tourism. Somalia and Syria, two nations that have seen some of the highest numbers of displaced people, were included



Nationality of Refugees Arriving in United States:

Oct. 1, 2016

Mar. 31, 2017

*map includes only
the Eastern Hemisphere

in this seven, along with Yemen, Iraq, Iran, Libya, and Sudan. A federal appeals panel unanimously upheld a decision from a United States Court of Appeals in San Francisco that rejected the executive order in early February.

It did not take long for the President to release a new executive order. He signed "Executive Order Protecting The Nation From Foreign Terrorist Entry Into The United States" on March 6 to defend his previous immigration action. Citizens from Iraq were no longer part of the ban, but citizens from the other six Muslim nations were still to be denied entry into the United States for 90 days. This ban was scheduled to go into effect on March 16, but it was blocked by a judge in Hawaii the preceding day.

Following these executive orders, Stanish has been pleasantly surprised by the response from people in the community. Admitting that he thought recent political action could severely hinder the ministry of CFNA, he has seen quite the opposite, as volunteer interest and donations have increased. Stanish highlights incongruity between President Trump's Republican Party and the people he encounters in his church; he ponders that the "impression that we have through the media is that the Christian Right, or whatever, kind of supported Trump, but then if that is the case, how are these Christians kind of interested in knowing more about [Syrian refugees]?"

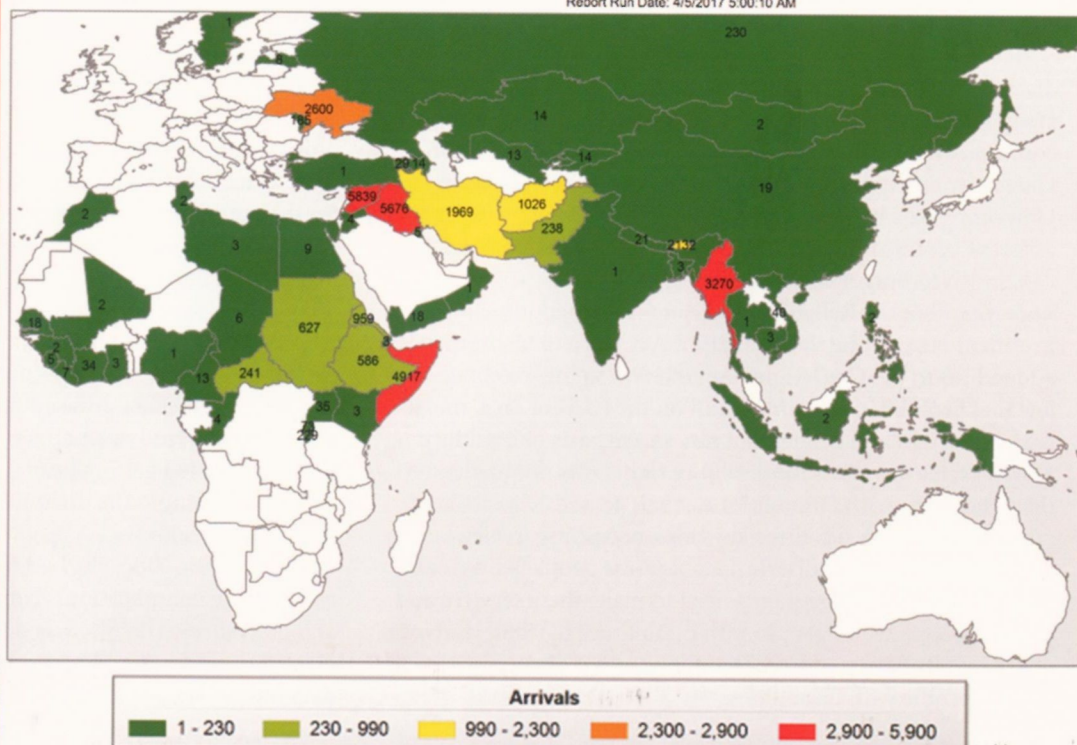
This is not an isolated case. Stanish's view that his church is "more about being a loved community and a sent community and wanting to engage with refugees or immigrants" has been seen throughout the country. The New

York Times released a story about Southern Christians ignoring the sentiments of the Republican platform and welcoming refugees on a local level. Such is the case in Marietta, Georgia, where members of the Johnson Ferry Baptist Church are offering support to refugees in their communities despite the actions of conservative politicians in the South to prevent refugee resettlement. This case in Georgia highlights a disconnect between leaders in the Republican Party and the Religious Right, two groups that are often closely associated.

As a Lutheran minister, Stanish has seen this desire to know and serve refugees stem from a sense of Christian vocation, but he has seen people of other faiths involved at CFNA as well. Knowing first-hand the shock of coming to the U.S. and trying to adjust to American life allows him to relate to the refugees that come to CFNA and to communicate genuinely with volunteers about what the transition is like. Every time that he talks about refugees, he refers to them as "friends," and it is with this sense of kinship and caring that he approaches his work.

With two executive orders blocked, ongoing civil war in the Middle East and increased interest in support on a local level, it is unclear how issues related to refugees will be addressed in the United States. Political battles have shaped national conversation, while people across the country have created their own conversations as they reach out to their refugee neighbors. With uncertainty and division, perhaps we can all take a note from Pastor Stanish moving forward, and think of refugees as our "friends."

Data extracted from the Worldwide Refugee Admissions Processing System (WRAPS).
RPCrpt_Arrivals/Arrivals by Nationality - Map
Report Run Date: 4/5/2017 5:00:10 AM



DISABILITY RIGHTS



Justin Seaton
Senior
Communication

Our society is divided in countless ways: by political opinions, religious affiliations, wealth, class, race and sexuality, to name a few. These divides can be bridged with policies and conversations. For people with disabilities, however, the physical divides can be just as polarizing as the ideological.

"Folks with disabilities, because they aren't interconnected with the non-disabled community, grow up separately in many ways," said David Newburger, Commissioner on the Disabled for the City of St. Louis. "The word I use is isolated. In my particular case, I never had a PE class. Probably my whole personality is a product of that."

Newburger was diagnosed with polio when he was 11 months old, just before the polio vaccine was released. "People around me died in those days," said Newburger. "But I made it."

After bouncing him between schools for children with disabilities, Newburger's parents enrolled him in the third grade at an "ordinary population school" with a single floor, so that he could easily get around. He went on to earn a B.A. from Oberlin University and a degree in law from Case Western Reserve University, which he soon put to use as a practicing lawyer and assistant professor of law at Washington University in St. Louis.

Newburger started working at Wash. U. in 1973, the same year that the Rehabilitation Act was signed into law by President Nixon. The Rehabilitation Act was a long-overdue addendum to the Civil Rights Act of 1964, an oft-celebrated law that prohibited discrimination on the basis of race, religion, national origin and gender, but not on the basis of disability. However, real progress for disability rights was not made until the Americans with Disabilities Act was passed 17 years later.

The ADA has three key titles, according to Newburger: (1) Employers cannot discriminate against people with disabilities. (2) Retail establishments need to make their services and products available to people with disabilities. (3) State and local governments have to ensure that they are not discriminating against people with disabilities.

When the ADA was passed in 1990, Newburger was practicing law out of his own firm, Newburger & Vossmeier, LLC, where he specialized in representing people with disabilities against former employers. Eventually he redirected his efforts to become a spokesperson and advocate. "I realized it would be better to help employers hire people with disabilities than to win one lawsuit for one employee," said Newburger.

Newburger has been the Commissioner on the Disabled for the City of St. Louis since 2008 and co-founded the Starkloff Disability Institute in 2011 with the goal of "making it possible for individuals with disabilities to be full and active participants in the community." His main goal today is to help employers find ways to successfully hire, retain and promote individuals with disabilities.

"People have a hard time seeing why we talk about discrimination. One of the examples that I often give is this: You have a burly man standing at the door of a club, for example, and he's set to block certain people of protected categories, and that's illegal under the Civil Rights Act. But if the same venue builds a new building and it puts three steps at the front door, that's just the same as having that big, burly guy standing there." Even with the likes of Newburger around to protect the rights of Americans with disabilities, those burly bouncers remain outside countless doorways — in the professional world, where only 20 percent of the disabled, working-age population have jobs; in schools that often provide minimal accommodations for their students, as mandated by law; and in a society plagued with longstanding biases — excluding people who have the right not to be excluded.

SLU student Sarah "Janeen" Rheinecker often feels excluded, but you wouldn't know that by her disposition.

Rheinecker grew up in Springfield, Missouri. At 28, she was a "healthy and normal" woman pursuing a nursing degree. Then she started getting headaches.

"I went to the doctor and he said I had a brain tumor," said Rheinecker.

A year later, she had the tumor removed, but there were lasting complications. Now Rheinecker is 35 years old and in a wheelchair. She was divorced around the time of the operation, and her ex-husband now has full custody of her two daughters. "They're the most important things in my life," said

Rheinecker, pulling up pictures of her kids seconds into the interview.

Rheinecker moved to St. Louis four years ago, into the 6 North apartments on Laclede Avenue, a block west of SLU. The 6 North building is universally designed, meaning it was built to be easily accessible for people with and without disabilities. People in wheelchairs cycled by the table where Janeen and I sat, and Janeen greeted each of them with delight. "It's like a family here," Rheinecker explained.

After a year at St. Louis Community College, Rheinecker transferred to SLU to pursue an undergraduate degree in Sociology. She said that, of the four colleges she has attended, SLU has the best accommodations for people with disabilities, though she still feels a divide.

"People will stare at you, not just on SLU's campus, but at Walgreens or the grocery store.

I had my daughter with me last week. We went to a movie and people would stare. But she put her arms on my shoulders and just said 'I don't care.'"

Matt Sullivan, the Director of Disability Services at Saint Louis University, works everyday to make SLU's campus more accessible and accepting for students like Rheinecker. His office provides equal access and opportunities to individuals who have documented, diagnosed disabilities within their academic environment. This equal access can take the form of any number of accommodations, from preferential seating and attendance to extended testing time. Of the SLU students who have registered with Disability Services, 75 percent have five or more academic accommodations. Sullivan and his office have provided those students numerous services to help them reach their potential, but the number of registered students on SLU's campus is remarkably low.

On average, 11 percent of college students have registered disabilities. At SLU, the number of students who have registered or disclosed is about 550, or 5.34 percent. "We would need another 450 to 500 students to register to equal the national average," said Sullivan.

Most students with disabilities never will disclose, though. Sullivan suspects that they are not aware of the resources that are available through his office, or that those students who are aware would rather do things on their own. "It's students not wanting to admit a form of cognitive limitation. It's a sort of pride... or stubbornness," said Sullivan.

Or perhaps students just don't want to be identified as their disability. Sullivan believes the key to positive change is restructuring the language surrounding people with disabilities.

"It starts by saying 'people with disabilities.' People are disabled by societal structures. Although my disabilities are a part of me, I'm not disabled by them. I'm disabled by my societal structures," said Sullivan, who is open with students and colleagues about his ADHD and anxiety.

*The goal is
to see the World*



*through the
eyes of*

the people who are disabled

Whether or not progress is dependent upon the language we use, every expert I talked to agreed that change will come slowly, at the individual level.

"The goal is to see the world through the eyes of the people who are disabled," said Newburger. "Don't do something before you ask the person if you can help or how to help. Some people simply will not accept help. Well, let them go."

"When people come up to me with their kids and they ask 'what happened to you,' that's refreshing," echoed Rheinecker.

As with all social issues, we have a long way to go as a society when it comes to disability rights. People with disabilities often live as outcasts, excluded from conversations and professions merely based on some physical or cognitive limitation. But the limitations themselves are not barring them from crossing this divide. We are. At the end of my interview with David Newburger, I scanned my notes and asked a hopeless question:

"Dr. Newburger, do you foresee a time when it will be, to quote your LinkedIn bio, 'possible for individuals with disabilities to be full and active participants in the community?'"

He said, "Do you foresee a time when there will be no religious wars? We shoot for a goal, but that doesn't mean we necessarily get there."

"Do you think you'll be doing this for the rest of your life?"

"Yep."



Ellen Cook
Senior
Communication
Sciences and Disorders

Most people have heard that men are paid more than women, but what does this mean and from where does this data come? The year of 2016 was full of rhetoric on the gender pay gap. In his January 2016 address, former President Barack Obama claimed that “over the course of her career, a working woman with a college degree will earn on average hundreds of thousands of dollars less than a man who does the same work.” Through a limited lens, this appears to be true.

The gender pay gap in the United States is defined as: the ratio of female to male median yearly earnings among full time, year-round workers. In 2016, the average white woman’s unadjusted annual salary was cited as 78 percent of the average man’s. However, for women of color, the overall pay gap is much worse. African-American women make 65 percent of the average white male’s salary while Latina women earn even less at 56 percent. The American Association of University Women (AAUW) published similar statistics but broke down the information by state to identify further inconsistencies in the wage gap. Using such statistics as support, many in the public eye promote the idea that employers and job markets discriminate against women. Celebrities such as Jennifer Lawrence, Patricia Arquette and Emma Watson, among others, frequently comment on the disparity between their pay and the pay of their male co-stars.

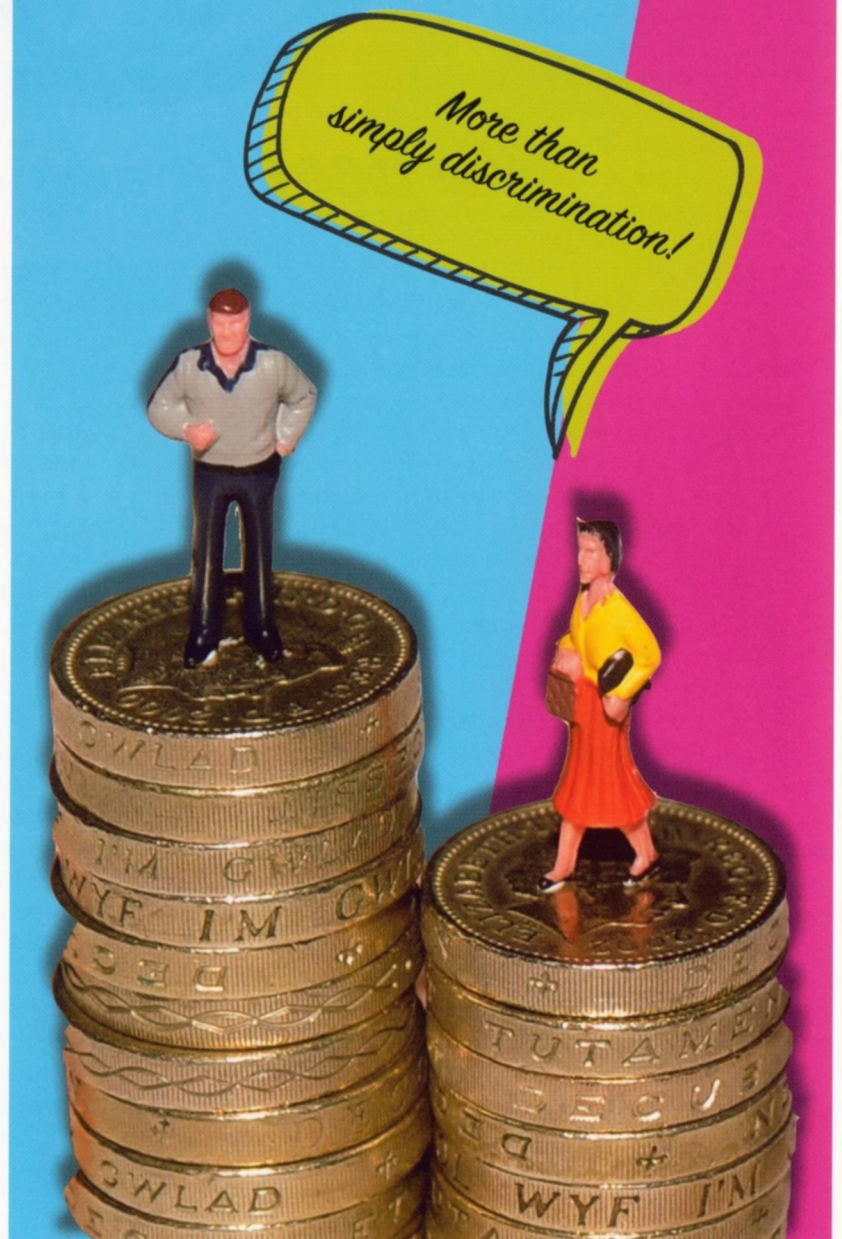
There is validity in such rhetoric. For centuries, women have found their gender identities defined not by themselves but by men, and their life choices are often shaped by the male gaze. Today, this reality persists: from the numerous articles targeting young girls to choose the “right” clothes or have the “perfect” body size in order to “please the guys,” to women in the workplace who often feel they have to dress in a more masculine way in order to be treated professionally.

However, women have come a long way in the workplace, and while the realities of gender inequality remain as it pertains to the wage gap, it is important to look at the full picture. In fact, current research indicates that the gender pay gap is a much broader issue than the media’s single story of discrimination. Apparent pay discrimination in the workplace is hard to find, and while it is not the main cause of the pay gap, it is still present in different jobs and industries. A recent example is seen in a comment from Jennifer Lawrence on her film “American Hustle.” Upon learning that she was paid less than her male counterparts, Lawrence blamed herself:

“I failed as a negotiator because I gave up early,” Lawrence said. “I didn’t want to keep fighting over millions of dollars that, frankly, due to two franchises,

ANOTHER SIDE TO THE

GENDER PAY GAP



I don't need.... But if I'm honest with myself, I would be lying if I didn't say there was an element of wanting to be liked that influenced my decision to close the deal without a real fight. I didn't want to seem 'difficult' or 'spoiled.'"

The ingrained behaviors of women as a result of systemic gender bias have an impact in the labor market. This systemic gender bias has played a role in women's job choices. While the notion of male versus female work and gender norms are becoming less prominent, they still have an impact in the types of jobs women pursue.

The paper "Orchestrating Impartiality," published by the American Economic Review, examines these social norms in a study examining the impact of blind auditions on female musicians. In the past 10–15 years, orchestras have started to implement a blind auditioning process, where judges make decisions based solely on the sound of an individual's performance. Auditioners are not even allowed to walk onstage to prevent the judges from distinguishing

weight or footfall patterns that are associated with a particular gender (e.g., recognizing high heels). In this isolated study, there was a 25 percent increase in female applicants auditioning for orchestras that implemented a blind audition.

How does this contribute to the pay gap? The opportunity gap is an additional component in the wage reality where, discrimination aside, women are still hesitant to pursue certain lines of work due to pre-constructed barriers.

Some feminists believe that the framework of economics is filled with subtle forms of sexism. Dr. Bonnie Wilson, an economics professor at SLU, commented on the importance of identifying the various layers of sexism found within social norms that are unfair to women. Alongside the gender wage gap, there are other biases with distinguishable causes. The opportunity gap is often influenced by factors such as one's socioeconomic status and contributes to unbalanced gender wage statistics. As the census data indicates, fewer black and Latina women are attending college compared to their white counterparts, and they are doing domestic work, which generally pays less. These environmental forces in society lead women into careers and occupations that are associated with lower salaries, according to Wilson. Women are not less capable individuals but, more often than not, come into such positions from a lack of opportunity to pursue lines of work associated with certain degrees.

Does a lack of opportunity for women in the workplace indicate gender discrimination? Claudia Goldman, Ph.D, a gender economics professor at Harvard University and top researcher on the gender pay gap, provides another explanation of the issue

called "temporal flexibility," in which the difference in pay between men and women is not considered pay discrimination, but a desire and need for job flexibility. Goldman argues that women are not being paid 20 percent less than men for the same work. Instead, they are doing different work or work that affords more flexibility, which pays less.

The gender pay gap "would be considerably reduced and might even vanish if firms did not have an incentive to disproportionately reward individuals who worked long hours and who worked particular hours," Goldman said.

Consider an example. Both Tyler and Susan work in the banking industry. Several years ago, Susan felt pressured to find less-demanding work because she needed to care for family members. As a result, she decided to choose a position in the banking business with a lower salary that allowed more flexibility. Both Susan and Tyler are still employed in the banking industry, but now the female worker is earning considerably less than the man.

Multiply this story by a few million and the gender pay gap emerges.

Lack of opportunity for higher paying jobs compounds the reality that, up until recently, companies refused to provide paternity leave, which forced women to stay at home longer. Although women like Susan often choose to find more flexible positions, policies and subtle sexism and gender expectations may pressure them to sacrifice higher paying roles in the workplace. Implementing a paternity policy would allow for an equal work-family balance between spouses. Companies can change the reality of biases in the labor market by equally valuing domestic

care work. Many businesses, such as Google, Facebook, Procter & Gamble and Patagonia have already started implementing a paid paternity leave policy.

With the propagation of statistics that do not convey the full picture of the gender wage gap, it is easy to search for a single villain, and "men" are often easy to blame. However, perhaps the real "bad guy" is our institutional framework—the antiquated structure of the labor market rather than the outright discrimination that we expect.

Forces in society are leading women into careers that provide lower salaries. The real questions are: How can we work to give women other options? How can we structure work in ways that allow for more flexibility? Although progressive policies will reduce the pay gap, a thorough understanding of historic discrimination and subtle racism and sexism within the labor market is needed in order to address the lack of opportunity for women in the workplace.

"With the propagation of statistics that do not convey the full picture of the gender wage gap, it is easy to search for a single villain, and 'men' are often easy to blame. However, perhaps the real 'bad guy' is our institutional framework—the antiquated structure of the labor market rather than the outright discrimination that we expect."

AUTHENTIC INCLUSION:



Micah Pfothenhauer
Junior

Public Health & Anthropology

A pursuit of justice and unity in the world seems futile when many divides exist on our own campus beyond our daily awareness. Among many, an increasingly apparent divide exists between SLU students who have grown up in the United States and those who have not, especially those from non-Western nations. Named “Word of the Year” by Dictionary.com, ‘xenophobia’ may not take form in travel bans or wall construction plans at our own university, but that does not mean it is not present in subtle ways. Though it may be awkward or uncomfortable, intentional acts to form relationships, small or deep, are the sharpest weapon to combat cultural divisions on campus.

SLU can further its Jesuit mission of being people for and with others — and challenge the current global and local status quo—by truly recognizing the “other” nationalities on our own campus. This simple, practical protest can manifest itself in the formation of a campus culture that is aware of and welcoming to students from the other side of the world. A document that defines and distinguishes our campus culture is the Oath of Inclusion, written by students as a visionary framework for the university we hope to create every day.

Take a moment to consider existing student organizations, groups, structures, or events at SLU that work to include international students into the broader campus culture. Currently, most international students are assigned to live in Marguerite Hall. This residential isolation makes cultural connection with American students difficult. Though, according to the Oath of Inclusion, we seek to create a “community inclusive of race, ethnicity, sex, age, ability, faith, orientation, gender, class and ideology,” the effort fails to include those who are not as familiar with the particularities of American or western culture. Although insufficient integration efforts by the university

Connecting with Our International Student Community

may contribute to this failure, students must acknowledge their part in this divide. From the security of established social networks, busy schedules and lack of needed effort to navigate uncertain waters of cultural differences, domestic students certainly have a list of excuses for failing to engage with people of other cultures.

The English Language Center at SLU, housed in Beracha Hall, offers academic English courses for those whose native language is not English. Matt Ryan, the English Language Coordinator, works with incoming international students everyday who are learning English to teach them both the language as well as practical cultural competency. He points to intentional open-mindedness and mutual understanding as keys to bridging very real cultural differences.

Any group of people outside one’s typical social circle can seem exclusive or intimidating, regardless of their race, gender, or class, among other characteristics. Fangjie He, a Chinese graduate student told me that he and the many Chinese friends he has made at SLU can often be shy.

“It’s not that we don’t like who we are meeting, we are just not as open at first, that is how our culture is.”

We must bear in mind these differences so as to avoid misinterpreting other’s demeanors and actions. It is essential to understand that we are working against a deeply ingrained cultural norm. Borrowing the thoughts of philosopher David Foster Wallace, our default mental setting is one which revolves solely on ourselves, so much so that life can become quite monotonous and lonely. In this way, interacting with anyone who seems distinctly different requires a breakout from our autopilot state, but it is worth the discomfort, as genuine growth follows; to be alive is to be outside one’s comfort zone. Global change is daunting, but influencing the spaces we live is a man-

ageable way to tackle this, bit by bit. How can we theorize changing the world without putting in a fundamental effort to connect those around us, with such richly diverse perspectives, backgrounds and experiences?

Our university takes pride in being an environment of diversity and inclusion, making well-meaning efforts to include students of all identities. However, we leave out an important body of students on our campus. We boast that 7 percent of our students come from 77 different countries, but both the university and student body fail to exhibit a strong effort to further integrate this diverse group of students upon their arrival at a university that prides itself on inclusion and acceptance.

Understanding another's perspective is imperative to creating an authentically integrated community. Shoujing Zhang enjoys being in the United States and has found Americans to be very polite, yet he agrees that it can be difficult to know how to interact with people who have a very different culture from his own. He is happy that he has gotten to know many of the other Chinese

“Though, according to the Oath of Inclusion, we seek to create a ‘community inclusive of race, ethnicity, sex, age, ability, faith, orientation, gender, class and ideology,’ the effort fails to include those who are not as familiar with the particularities of American or western culture.”

students at this school, as he did not know anyone when he came here pursuing a masters in finance. He does wish that he had more American friends.

Xinyuan Nie moved here from China last summer. He is 18 years old and considers himself to be very laidback and did not experience too much culture shock when he came to the U.S. That being said, he still felt himself to be shy and scared to talk, simply being in a new place. He observes differences in values here, with more emphasis placed on the individual. “Compared to China”, he said, “everything here has a schedule. You cannot do anything without planning it first.” Many insights about our own way of life can be learned by engaging with those who bring with them a valuable, but different set of customs and norms.

Ashraf Ahmed, a native Nigerian, noticed that, “Americans tend to look at foreign culture with intrigue. It just kind of spooks some international people.... When the differences are not major, Americans very much appreciate foreign culture.” Our entire student body must challenge

itself to make strides in appreciating and welcoming foreign cultures regardless of the degrees of difference. A phrase from the Oath of Inclusion rings true, stating that “We find higher truths when we seek to understand the complexity of our neighbors’ identities.” Our ways of making sense of the world around us may vary, but at the core we are all humans at an uncertain and transitory stage of life, looking to form meaningful relationships with others. Fangjie shared that being invited to play basketball at the rec with his friend Nate has made him feel most included in American culture. “When we were playing basketball, we don’t feel very different.” Share something you love with someone you normally would not. It may sound simple, but these small actions are the ones from which great change stems.

If nothing else, we, as a SLU community, should bear in mind the power of a brief break from our comfort zone to make a small effort to get to know someone better. Let’s take small but intentional steps forward, giving a simple but authentic life to ‘diversity’ and ‘inclusion’ with much deeper meaning than just another 21st century buzzword.

实践誓言

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实践誓言

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A CAMPUS DIVIDED:

Geography's Grip on Political Identity



Fiona Clair
Sophomore
Communication &
International Studies

The events that transpired on Nov. 8, 2016 will be remembered as some of the most polarizing in United States' history. Like all the preceding first Tuesdays of November every four years since 1845, this date determined the next leader of the "free world." Since the election that ushered in Franklin Delano Roosevelt in 1932, the New York Times has sent out a poll to the public that asks, "What do you think is the most important problem facing this country today?" For the first time, "unifying the country" was a top response this year, and it is not hard to see why. When George Washington and John Adams warned against the formation of political parties, their pleas were not taken earnestly. Since the age of the Federalists and the Republicans, politicians have lied, cheated and stolen in the name of their party. From the spoils system developed under the Jacksonian Democracy, to the use of social media sites to spread libel in today's modern age, ignoring the warning of our founding fathers has proven disastrous for the true unification of our nation.

In an election year, the map of the U.S. is dressed to the nines in our fine colors of red and blue, the same colors we proudly wear in our homes, schools, places of worship and communities. However, the question remains: How does a nation divided on even the most basic principles remain unified? On a large scale, this question seems impossible to answer, but what

if the population was resized to a smaller community of people from all over the country all living in the same environment? For instance, a college campus.

It is no secret that Chicago is a liberal city, or that Texas is a conservative state. Missouri is painted red on an election map, but St. Louis stands as a smudge of blue in that red sea. People are naturally drawn to similarity, and there are clearly defined visual clusters of liberals and conservatives throughout the U.S. Many people are raised in communities with strong political allegiances to which they remain loyal for the rest of their lives. Others seek to leave the stifling political atmosphere of their hometowns and find refuge in a community that reflects their own opinions and revulsions. But what happens when a mix of political identities are thrown together and encouraged to vote for the next leader of the nation? College campuses are a strange sort of intellectual experiment. They are liberal, sometimes in more ways than one, offering an environment that is open to new behaviors and opinions in order to broaden students' perspectives and experiences.

Academic institutions play an influential role in the formation of our country's future. Not only are they responsible for educating the next generation of citizens, but also for shaping the perspectives of the people choosing and becoming the next leaders of our country. For the typical college undergraduate at Saint Louis University between the ages of 18 to 22, the 2016 election was their first opportunity to vote. It is crucial now more than ever to question if and how geography nurtures individual political identity. Did hometown geography affect students' decisions on Nov 8? Did students' time on SLU's campus have any affect on their final vote?

Jada Peten, a freshman in the Leadership for Social Change Learning Community at SLU, is from Bald Knob,

OUT OF 75 SLU STUDENTS



Arkansas, a predominantly conservative town. She identifies as a Leftist, and she feels strongly that geography affects political identity. Since moving to St. Louis, while she does not feel the city environment has influenced her views, she does appreciate being around people who share her beliefs and feels there are more politically affiliated groups and organizations in the city with which she can become involved than in her hometown. Peten does not feel pressured into moving permanently to a place based on the appeals of its political identity. She enjoys the ability to practice her political ideals freely in St. Louis, but she does not feel a resentment towards the opposing views back in Bald Knob.

"I like being away from home, but you get used to the little things [that go against your political ideals] in your hometown," she said.

Social science correspondent for National Public Radio, Shankar Vedantam, asserted that political ideology and geography are linked to the increased mobility of American society. He explained in an interview on "Morning Edition" that people who find themselves living in a community whose political identity does not match their own are more likely to try and find a way to move into a different community that does. While his theory has its benefits in community-building, the downside is that our nation becomes increasingly polarized and complacent: "The United States is going to get less united," he said.

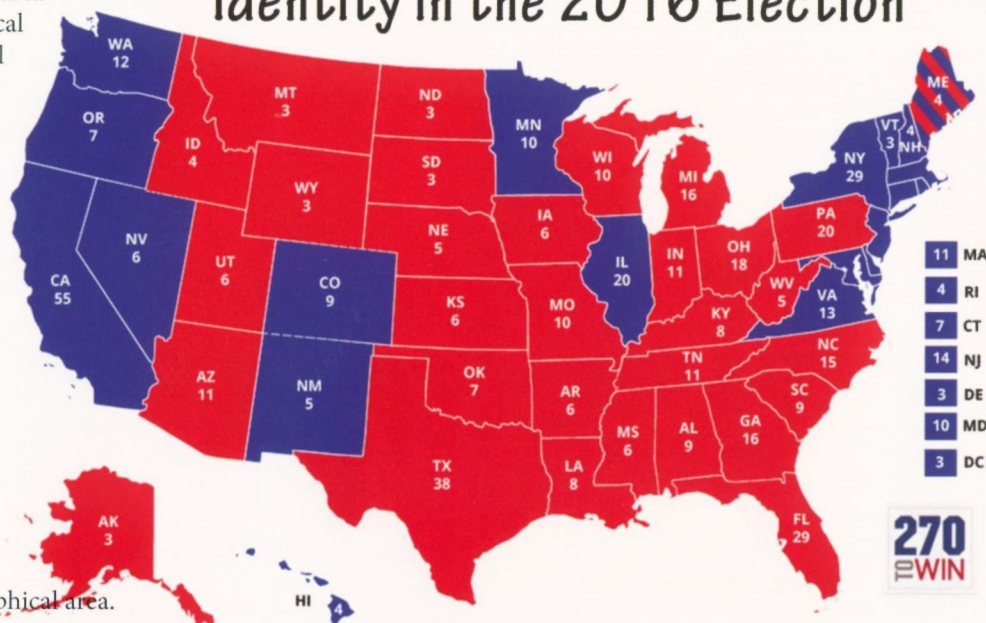
On a nation-wide scale, political identity is one of the chief divisions of the U.S., but what does that divide look like on an individual college campus? In an anonymous, 75-student survey of SLU students distributed through Facebook, 18 identified as coming from a liberal geographical area and 39 from a conservative geographical area. The rest noticed no clear political identity majority in their hometown or family. Of the 18 who came from a liberal background, 78 percent personally identify as having a Democrat/liberal political identity, and of the 39 who came from a conservative background, 26 percent personally identify as having a Republican/conservative political identity. In this instance, students from a liberal geographical area who are attending SLU, a socially liberal-leaning environment, are more likely to maintain their home political identity than students who came from a conservative geographical area.

This sample is small. It is possible that SLU's campus environment has no effect on the students' political identity. However, it brings to light the ideological makeup of SLU's students on a more tangible scale. The fact that almost 60 percent of students from a conservative background identify as "liberal" could speak to the nature of political mobility in the U.S. as a whole. People are drawn toward likeness, and whether this movement is subconscious or not, people are more likely to move to a place where their political ideals are upheld than to remain the minority in a place where they are not.

Terms like conservative or liberal leave a sour taste in people's mouths today. After an election year, students and citizens alike feel the need to stray away from politics altogether because of the polarizing effects of the current political structure. Although political divides drive groups and individuals apart, they have the potential to benefit both individuals and society. Sharing the thoughts and beliefs of others, building communities and working toward common goals are all functions of political parties, but these goals are largely ignored. People instead choose to focus on the division, hate and inequality of political partisanship today.

Perhaps total unity is not realistic, but the language and attitude used in the discussion of political ideology must change in order to bridge the destructive divides our political parties represent today. A college campus provides an ideal space for dialogue between differing groups, providing students with the perspectives they need to form opinions of their own. The only way to be genuinely grounded in your ideals is to be able to conceptualize them, learn about differing perspectives and begin to understand where your differences lie and why. The existence of political parties on a college campus does not remove the need for empathy; in contrast, it creates a need where there otherwise would not be. Whether differences arise from geographical location, upbringing, heritage or tradition, they are an underappreciated beauty of this world. Without difference or divide, the world would be stagnant, and our electoral map would don a lonely hue.

Geographical Break down of Political Identity in the 2016 Election



Education in Prison: A Solution to Mass Incarceration



MLK Scholars Small Group

Jasmin Robles, Soohyun Lee
Sumrah Khan, Stella Jeong,
Smrithi Chidambaram

Hands, once shackled and locked away behind bars, reach out to receive their diploma. This was the reality for some of the members of the the first graduating class of 2015 from the Saint Louis University Prison Program—a unique program that provides coursework leading to an Associate of Arts degree for prison staff and incarcerated individuals. It is the only program of its kind in the country, offering on-site higher education to both groups of students. The program's mission is to “offer human connection, an appreciation for the arts and resources for positive self-expression, and personal growth.” It works to remove barriers and offer educational opportunities to previously under-resourced community members who have faced incarceration or the challenges of working within the prison system. The dream of achieving higher-level education could only be made a reality with the vision of bridging the divides between formerly incarcerated citizens, men and women working in the prison system and the community as a whole.

Mary Gould, Director of the Saint Louis University Prison Program, emphasized the importance of the program: “It represents the best of what we do as a Jesuit University. We go to the prison because we know that each person incarcerated or person working within the prison system deserves the same high quality educational opportunities afforded to students on [SLU's] campus and campuses around the country.” Gould and her colleagues go to the prison each week to teach class, facilitate workshops, and present lectures. “In Missouri, 97 percent of the men and women in prison will come back to our shared community,” said Gould. She advocates that we have a responsibility, as community members and as “men and women for others,” to help make the transition easier and to increase their ability to live a happy and healthy life.

Gould recognizes the need for a holistic approach to educational opportunities for the incarcerated population. Individuals released from prison without a college education have a 65 percent chance of returning to prison. College education reduces recidivism to as low as 5–15 percent rate of return to prison. Unfortunately, according to the U.S. Department of Justice, 68 percent of state inmates do not have a high school diploma. The need for transformative and intellectually stimulating education is undeniable, because it can improve the lives of individuals once they are released from the prison system and can decrease the rate of mass incarceration.



The issue of mass incarceration has grown in importance, specifically over the past four decades, because the population of incarcerated individuals has risen exponentially. This boom can be attributed to 'war on crime' and 'war on drugs' legislation. Currently, one in five prisoners are incarcerated for nonviolent drug crimes. Additionally, the majority of youth who serve time in federal prisons are also charged with nonviolent crimes. For most of these individuals, that means that they have to forego any sort of education or means to support themselves once they are released from prison. This creates a cycle of poverty which threatens reincarceration.

To decrease the high reincarceration rate, the Missouri Department of Corrections offers various services and programs for incarcerated individuals. The largest and the most prominent service is the Adult Basic Education (ABE) program. This course is required for any offender who does not have a high school diploma or High School Equivalency Certificate (HSE). Through this program, one can work toward obtaining the HSE certificate or go through specialized job training, which includes automotive repair, plumbing, industrial technology or electrical wiring, among other trades. According to the RAND Corporation, an American non-profit global policy research organization, these correctional programs do lower the recidivating rates by 43 percent and increase the odds of obtaining post-release employment rate by 13 percent.

The statistics seem promising, but these programs do not ultimately guarantee a better quality of life after prison. Many inmates who are reentering the workforce almost immediately face poverty due to the low wages associated with the jobs they are able to attain.

What if, in addition to the ABE program, the state offered post-secondary education courses? Some may think that providing higher education to prisoners may seem excessive and useless, but it can be a life-changing opportunity for those who want to advance their lives in the future.

RAND research shows that 32 out of 46 states that replied to the survey stated that they do offer adult post-secondary education courses. However, the enrollment of incarcerated students is very low due to lack of funding. In the 1990s, the U.S. Congress excluded prisoners from the Pell Basic Education Opportunity Grant, which resulted in the closure of more than half of the existing post-secondary education programs. The study conducted by the Institute for Higher Education (IHEP) in 2010 shows that only 6 percent of the incarcerated population are actually enrolled in higher education program. Despite of the low enrollment rate, the IHEP study suggests that post-secondary education is the most effective at reducing the prison

inmate return rate. About 15 percent of the released inmates who had an associate's degree returned back to prison, while only 5 percent of the released inmates with a bachelor's degree returned to prison. These statistics are significantly lower than the average return rate for the people without college degree, which is 65 percent. Their educational background not only helped them to readjust to society, but also enabled them to apply for higher-income jobs. Solid, steady income will help them to get out of poverty and encourage them to succeed.

The incarcerated population in the US, often marginalized and stigmatized, is still a part of our community, and the treatment of incarcerated men and women reflect a community's values. Rather than leaving incarcerated individuals to continuously move through a cycle of imprisonment, oppression, and hardship, it would benefit our society as a whole to provide incarcerated people with the tools necessary to sustain an adequate living and contribute positively upon reentering society. One student reflected on his time as a student in the SLU Prison Program saying: "This project helped me to develop a realistic identity as a human being. As a child, higher education, arts and sciences, and such were only for the wealthy. My own avenue to

higher education was sports. So, if I was not a superstar athlete, my life was a constant struggle to make ends meet. The Saint Louis University program allowed me to learn that I do have an aptitude for higher education and that my economic upbringing and race should not and will not inhibit me from participating in all aspects of society...Every encounter with SLU staff and associates is life-altering and an opportunity to spread love throughout the community, creating change."

After serving time for a crime and being removed from society, the expectation

to return and instantly be a productive citizen with little to no support is an unrealistic goal. The Saint Louis University Prison Program believes that "education in prison is transformative and the skills developed through pre-college and/or college coursework create a more socially just living and working environment inside the prison." Incarcerated individuals, like all human beings, deserve the chance to thrive. For many, this is not their second chance to start over and build a new life, but could be their first opportunity to do so. The provision of education to incarcerated men and women is an issue of social justice. This cause is one that requires us to offer compassion, empathy and encouragement to our neighbors. These men, women, and young people in prisons or correctional facilities need to know that we stand in solidarity with them and advocate for their dignity as our neighbor. It is essential to focus on the humanity of the incarcerated individuals, their specific needs, and their capacity to thrive upon returning to our shared community.



April 14, 2014: JUAN WILLIAM CHAVEZ and KIERSTEN TORREZ discussing public art and social practice at the Eastern Reception, Diagnostic and Correctional Center in Bonne Terre, MO as part of the Saint Louis University Prison Program Inside Out Speaker Series.



Royce Dong
Freshman
Physics

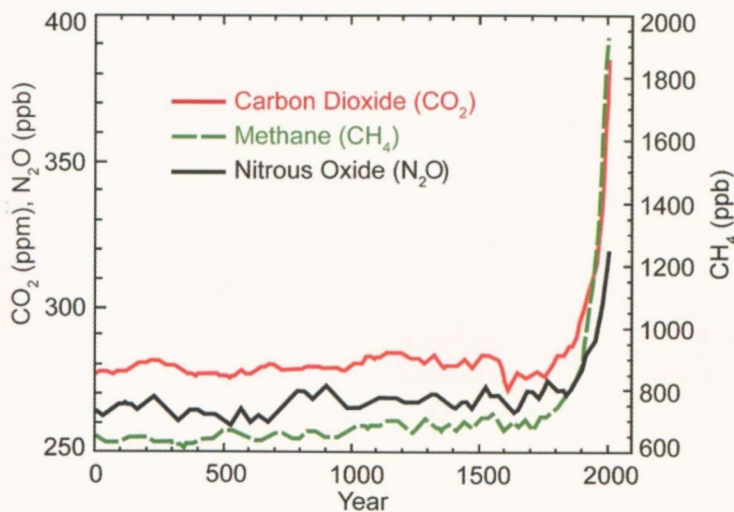
Polar bears stranded on melting rafts of ice. A surrounding abyss of deep blue. Hopelessness visible in their eyes. These iconic images bring to light the tragic but true reality for some inhabitants of Earth, half a world away, that are quickly finding themselves without a home. The polar ice sheets have been shrinking at an unprecedented rate in recent years, and they are not slowing down. A 2013 scientific study conducted by the U.S. National Oceanic Atmospheric Administration predicts that by the summer of 2050 the ice sheets may be reduced to nothing; so too may the polar bear population. Still, more than highlighting life in the Arctic, polar bears have become the “poster child” for the global phenomenon that is climate change.

Since the 1800s, the Earth has been heating up very quickly. There are tangible signs—more devastating storms such as the category-5 Hurricane Matthew of 2016, intense heat waves like the California drought of recent years and rising ocean levels that threaten to submerge much of South Florida by the end of the century. However, we also know this to be true from statistical data. Scientists have been able to keep track of these global patterns by piecing together snapshots of past climates, preserved in natural records such as glacial ice layers, tree rings, seashells and sedimentary rocks. Both land and ocean data show that the Earth’s surface temperature has risen over 1.5 degrees Fahrenheit since 1880.

The warming is only getting worse with time. Until 1970, global temperatures grew at a rate of around 0.1 degrees Fahrenheit per decade. Afterward, the rate tripled to 0.3 degrees per decade. A 2005 study published in *Nature* magazine found that this dramatic warming has dramatic effects on life, causing over 150,000 deaths each year in the previous 30 years due to crop failure, tropical storms and increased transmission of diseases. Out of the 17 hottest years on record, 16 have been in the 21st century. Should this trend continue, entire ecosystems and billions of people could be harmed in only a few decades. There is no denying the existence of climate change and the threat it poses to the Earth’s inhabitants; overwhelming evidence exists that proves this end. So why is there controversy?

On one hand, some people don’t believe climate change exists at all. This belief is reasonable given the nature of our everyday exposure to the weather. The temperature goes up and down throughout the day. Precipitation varies just the same. Because we don’t witness ground-zero of climate change, where events such as melting ice are more noticeable, it’s hard to keep track of long-term trends. A 2016 study published in *Proceedings of the National Academy of Sciences* found that skepticism of climate change is likely grounded in the variability of local weather, especially in areas where the local climate appears to have been

THREAT ON THE HORIZON



Elavating concetrations of greenhouse gases in Earth's atmosphere over the last 2,000 years
 source: U.S. National Climate Assessment (2014)

cooling. Because of the important role that personal experience plays in our judgement, it's not hard to see how skeptics can favor direct observations over global evidence provided by scientists.

On the other hand, some believe in climate change but not climate change caused by humans. They instead see global warming more as a natural phenomenon. The Earth has always heated up and cooled down over its lifetime, from regular fluctuations in the concentrations of greenhouse gases, oceanic cycles such as El Nino, the amount of energy provided by the Sun and even the reflectivity of the Earth's atmosphere. According to this argument, today is no different. A 2003 study published by the Harvard-Smithsonian Center for Astrophysics claimed that the "20th century is neither the warmest century nor the century with the most extreme weather of the past 1000 years." Other sources point to previous ice ages and warm periods from Earth's geologic history to underline that the climate observed today is by no means near the extremes.

However, the calculus of the global climate is not that simple. It is not about extremes but rate of change. The temperature of the Earth today is changing at a rate nearly 10 times faster than any in the past 2 million years. This extreme warming speed cannot be explained by natural processes alone; it can only be explained when human activity is taken into account as well.

Dating back to the early 18th century, the Industrial Revolution led to a rise in carbon emissions like carbon dioxide and methane. These are known as greenhouse gases, the primary contributors to climate change via their namesake effect. Matthew Roark, a sophomore at SLU studying meteorology, provides some insight on the underlying process.

"Triatomic molecules, such as CO₂, methane and ozone, aid in reflecting long wave radiation back onto earth's surface creating an increase in surface temperature with each reflection," he said. "Simply put, the more carbon dioxide or other greenhouse gas present will reflect more long wave radiation further increasing temperatures."

So, the more the greenhouse gases, the hotter the

planet becomes. Nearly all climate scientists—upwards of 97%—align with this belief of man-made global warming. But even if climate change is happening and is happening because of humans, why should SLU students care if they aren't really affected by it? Matthew shares his thoughts on the issue.

"Climate Change should be considered incredibly relevant to SLU students. Climate change affects everyone. This is not simply an issue one can just run away from. This problem will most likely affect all regions of the earth for centuries to come. As a Jesuit community and a world community, it is only reasonable to care about all walks of life."

Dr. Jack Fishman, professor in the Department of Earth and Atmospheric Sciences at SLU and previous senior research scientist of over 30 years at NASA, has a similar message for students.

"It is most important that SLU students clearly understand that there is absolutely NO AMBIGUITY about the existence of climate change."

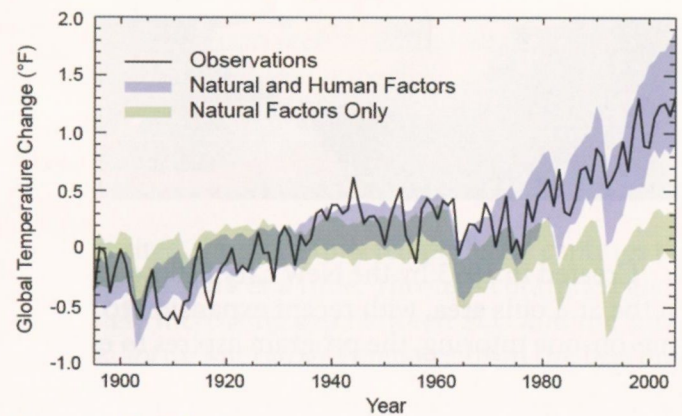
After all, awareness is what drives change. He continued by quoting Pope Francis' encyclical on the climate, *Laudato si'*.

"The climate is a common good, belonging to all and meant for all. At the global level, it is a complex system linked to many of the essential conditions for human life. A very solid scientific consensus indicates that we are presently witnessing a disturbing warming of the climatic system... Humanity is called to recognize the need for changes of lifestyle, production and consumption, in order to combat this warming or at least the human causes which produce or aggravate it."

Dr. Fishman ended on an optimistic note.

"As the saying goes, SLU students should think globally and act locally. There are numerous activities that students can get involved in... Do whatever you feel most comfortable doing." The bottom line is clear: the climate is changing at an alarming rate and will only worsen from the look of things. If the status quo remains, future generations won't get much of a chance to appreciate the planet we call our home, much less see a polar bear for themselves.

Separating Human and Natural Influences on Climate



Observed global temperatures increased over the past century, alongside models that take into account both human and natural causes and models that take into account only natural causes. It is clear that the observed warming cannot be explained by natural processes alone. Human-generated greenhouse gases are the main driving force behind global warming.

Source: United States Environmental Protection Agency (2017)



PICTURE THIS



Luke San Roman

Junior

Public Health (Pre-Med)

"Act Justly...Love Mercy...Walk Humbly." (Micah 6:8)

This proverb serves as the foundation of the Micah Service Learning Community within Saint Louis University. It encapsulates the service component of the Micah program, whereby Micah students serve two-three hours weekly at over fourteen different sites in the St. Louis community.

(↓Brenna and Hlon)



(↑Stephanie and Ramtha)



(← Closet: Ben and Thawng Pi)

(← Further: Ashley and Anjan)



"My service at Firm Foundation, South has been some of the highest highs and the lowest lows of my year. I've worked with an eleven-year-old Nepali boy who, despite the heartbreaking hand life had dealt him, would have me laughing till my sides hurt. He opened my eyes to both the beauty and the hurt that encompass humanity; he has changed what I thought it meant to love."

– Ashley

Created in 1993 by the New City Fellowship of St. Louis, Firm Foundation reaches out to students of all ages in the St. Louis area, with recent expansion to accommodate immigrant and refugee children. Through one-on-one tutoring, the program aspires to establish a sound academic foundation in its students, giving them an opportunity many might not otherwise have at home or school. Aiding in Firm Foundation's efforts, the Micah program sends tutors to both the North and South locations of Firm Foundation. These photos come from the South Location, which focuses primarily on guiding immigrant and refugee children from Burma, Liberia, and Nepal. When asked about her opinion on the work Micah has done with Firm Foundation, Kristen Flores, the South City Tutoring Coordinator, said:

"Because of the large number of Micahs, the kids are able to be paired one on one with a tutor and we have been able to really expand the program... They have served as an inspiration to the students that college is obtainable."



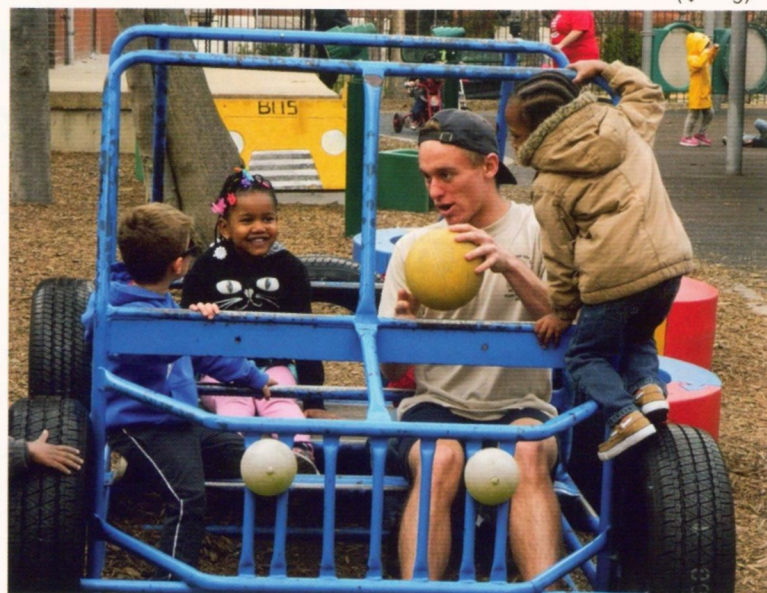
(← Sean)

"Service is about fostering meaningful connections with others. It is about giving yourself, your time, and your attention fully to someone else... We come together every week and give ourselves to each other in both big and seemingly small ways. Those little moments form the meaningful connections that make service so special."

– Sean



(↑ Chris)



(↓ Greg)

Established as a nonprofit, the Cornerstone Center for Early learning aims to teach children from the ages of three weeks to six years under constructivist philosophy, covering everything from brushing their teeth to proper social dialogue. By adjusting pricing on a per family basis, Cornerstone allows parents to remain within the workforce or to pursue higher education, while assuring that their children receive dutiful attention. Within Cornerstone, the Micah students usually assist by helping to entertain the children, especially during recess time. While the Micah students mostly play with or read to the children, the Coordinator of Special Programs for Cornerstone, Toni Jackson, posed that they "provide a positive example for the students, especially for our younger male ones, of which some might not have a positive male role model."

While the above photos only illustrate two of fourteen different sites, the story they tell perfectly captures the differences one can make in a community, even if it occurs one small gesture at a time. Through continued and concerted effort, the Micah program attempts to tackle the seemingly increasing gap between SLU and the surrounding community. This gap does not materialize in the physical form, but rather emanates from the preconceived notions that arise from confusion to the operations that occur within SLU. With personal connection, the Micah program helps spread the Jesuit mission of SLU to people who otherwise would have no affiliation with the university. Furthermore, while this article only introduces two quotes from site faculty, anyone who asked around a Micah service site would hear resounding affirmations to the benefits of the volunteer work they perform. As Ashley beautifully put in her above quote, service opens one's eyes to the wonders of humanity and as Sean affirms, the little moments culminate to make a big difference. In essence, the Micah community paints a unique and hopeful picture of bridging the gap between Saint Louis University and the surrounding St. Louis community.

FIRST-GENERATION STUDENTS: SECOND TO NONE

*Classes are a competition,
myself versus privileged peers.
Hey, don't laugh when I speak.
Reading about policies that affect my family
Cut in food stamps are more than just a discussion topic.
Who but me has been on welfare?*



Tyler Roche
Senior
Nursing

According to the U.S. Department of Education, a first-generation college student is defined as one whose parents' highest level of education is a high school diploma or less.

Alarming statistics represent the divide between some first-generation students and their peers. A study conducted at UCLA showed that 42 percent of non-first-generation students graduated within four years, compared to only the 26 percent of first-generation students. The National Center for Education Statistics found that 82 percent of students whose parents held a bachelor's degree enrolled in college following high school. Of the students whose parents had completed high school, only 54 percent of them enrolled in college. For those whose parents had less than a high school degree, only 36 percent enrolled in college.

For some first-generation students, the transition into college is simple; however, for others, remedial education and mentoring is essential due to the absence of postsecondary education in their families. The rigorous academics of universities across the nation and the pressure to branch out socially create a whirlwind of chaos for these students. What are universities doing to make this transition smooth?

TRiO is a federally-funded program instituted in colleges nationwide to aid in the transition from middle school to post-baccalaureate education. It targets individuals from low-income backgrounds, students with disabilities and first-generation students. At SLU, students are involved in a subset of TRiO known as Student Support Services (SSS). According to the

U.S. Department of Education, all SSS projects must provide academic tutoring, advice and assistance in course selection and advising on financial aid and scholarships. The hope is that these services will result in increased graduation rates within its target population.

Linh Ngo, a sophomore majoring in civil engineering, is a member of the SSS program at SLU. She noted TRiO's emphasis on aiding members of the program financially, offering free printing services and a waiver on housing application fees. Evident to Ngo was the advantage non-first-generation students have financially when completing financial aid applications such as FAFSA.

"When I do the FAFSA, I have to do it. My mom doesn't do it and she doesn't speak English so I do everything," Ngo said. She compares this process to her friends, whose families might be more familiar with the federal aid application process.

Financial aid is a key factor that first-generation students consider when choosing a college. In order to evaluate these differences, I spoke to two non-first-generation SLU students.

Johanna Reedy is a third-generation senior studying Public Health. She explained the availability of help and direction that she received when applying for financial aid.

"I applied to FAFSA because my dad told me to but only got a little help if I was confused about something," she said.

Mary Kate Brendich, a senior studying Communication Sciences and Disorders, discussed the ease in applying for financial aid as a second-generation college student.

"My brother, with the help of my parents, applied for FAFSA before starting school at SLU in the Fall of 2008," she said. "Upon receiving no financial aid, my parents decided there was little benefit in me applying and going through the process again when I started at SLU in 2013."

Studies have taken a closer look into the persistence toward the long-term goals of first-generation students in regard to economic prosperity, career stability and general aspirations for the future. The U.S. Department of Education has investigated these variables, finding trends consistent throughout the average American first-generation student demographic.

Various studies have found that first-generation students are less academically prepared, and those attending not-for-profit four-year universities, such as SLU, are more likely to engage in compensatory education prior to college. Though students like Ngo were first exposed to TRiO during college,

“For those whose parents had less than a high school degree, only 36 percent enrolled in college.”

these federally-funded programs can begin assisting students in elementary school.

There are a number of reasons why SLU students chose this institution. For some, it was the Jesuit education; for others, the remarkable academics. Some chose SLU because of a particular learning community with which they identified. For many others, the choice depended on the cost, the scholarship that covers a large fraction of the tuition and the proximity to one's hometown.

Paige Pearson is a junior studying Biology and Theology from nearby Florissant, MO. She is a first-generation college student. Research shows that first-generation students take into consideration location near their hometown when considering potential colleges. Pearson spoke to this when she disclosed that she chose SLU based on its proximity to her home. The short commute would allow her to take care of her family when needed.

Though the statistics show that first-generation students strive for financial prosperity upon graduation, Pearson explained the longevity of a career is more worthwhile when using a college education for a job you love.

“It's more of finding something that I love to do. So far,

working at the zoo is something that I love doing even though it's not paid,” she said. “The financial side is important, but also finding something you enjoy because you're going to do it for the rest of your life.”

The transition from high school to college is a multifaceted one. Students must balance both academic and social transitions. Both Ngo and Pearson explain what this means for first-generation students at SLU.

Ngo discusses her social transition into SLU as a freshman, absent of challenges commonly experienced by a first-generation college student. Her successful transition can be partly attributed to the TRiO program and related services. She highlighted the common ground felt by the members of TRiO.

“I have met a lot of people who are in TRiO. It's nice to talk to them because they are in the same shoes as I am as a first-generation student. We relate more.”

Ngo commented on the efforts made by TRiO to promote events for those in the program, creating a social atmosphere and a comfortable transition into college for first-generation students at SLU. Pearson cheerfully attests to this comfortable social transition, highlighting the example of frequent encounters with friends while walking down West Pine.

Despite the financial and systemic barriers faced by first-generation students, these individuals have demonstrated their tenacity and drive to become more than just a statistic or stereotype. Pearson and Ngo are only a fraction of those working to do so. Perhaps it is gratitude for the opportunity not given to their parents that contributes to their success. Regardless, first-generation college students have displayed unwavering optimism and diligence while navigating the SLU college experience, evident in the way they have persisted through life's challenges thus far.

In order to maintain increased graduation rates among first-generation students, we must continue to use the given resources and the SLU community as a vehicle to move these students forward. SLU has proven to be an elite force at providing accommodations for students facing a difficult transition into college. With the proper resources provided here at SLU and the comradery shown amongst first-year students, first-generation students at SLU have risen above the statistics.

*I am good at bending and stretching without breaking,
For I am a bridge that connects places
that are uncomfortable with one another,
A bridge that says that
we won't treat disadvantaged kids as the other
To be conquered with policies
that see us simply as statistics.*

DENIED DIALOGUE:

The Importance of History and Humility in Political Conversations



Brenna Sullivan
Senior
Psychology & Sociology

"We shall advance when we have learned humility; when we have learned to seek truth, to reveal it and publish it; when we care more for that than for the privilege of arguing about ideas in a fog of uncertainty." — Walter Lippmann

Lippmann's words carry more weight than ever in today's divided political climate. The time has come for greater humility within dialogue, particularly surrounding the 2016 election. In its most valuable form, dialogue requires discussion, listening and reflection among all persons or groups involved in order to further societal and personal development. It is this listening component that provides an aspect of humility, as most individuals tend to prepare their next statements while another speaks rather than truly hearing them.

As citizens sequester themselves within the respective boundaries of their political party lines, avoiding conflict, it is critical to also consider the mission promoted here at Saint Louis University: the pursuit of truth for the greater glory of God and for the service of humanity. With Lippman's quote and SLU's mission in mind, this pursuit of humble dialogue, and therefore truth, is best achieved through the acknowledgement of proper history and limitations of personal experience.

As Americans, we are presented with a prideful history that showcases our country as "the land of the free and the home of the brave," a breeding ground for innovation and hard-earned success. Battles were fought, soldiers were lost, but the wars were won and patriotism soon became an ideology of the American people. To be an American is to be proud of what our heritage has led us to achieve, to be grateful for the sacrifices of those who came before us in order to have achieved at all. But what if the accomplishments read and taught about in history books are only part of the story? What if they came at the great expense of the heritage and identities of other Americans?

To highlight this, it is important to reference the teaching of the Trail of Tears in our high schools. Many students learn about this through a lens of trading of land; white settlers would settle in the Native lands that were east of the

Mississippi to grow cotton, and the Native Americans would agree to move west. However, according to Howard Zinn's *A People's History of the United States*, this "trade" was not a choice for the Native Americans, particularly the Cherokee who had remained nonviolent until their forced removal. Their trek to the West was an involuntary ultimatum of leave or die with no resources and nothing to settle into once they got there. A large number died on this journey at the benefit of white settlers profiting on the cotton-rich land of the East.

Another example to consider is that of the Civil Rights Movement. Following the Emancipation Proclamation of 1865 that freed slaves and the 1892-1896 case of *Plessy v. Ferguson* that upheld racial segregation claiming "separate but equal" resources, it was thought by lawmakers that things were fair and stirrings of uprising would quiet down. However, when people realized that segregation left matters separate but clearly unequal, a revolution began that supposedly ended racism by 1964. Bryan Stevenson, author of *Just Mercy* and founder of the Alabama-based Equal Justice Initiative, addressed the disparities between the history books and real life in a panel discussion held at Stanford University in 2016:

"I hear people talking about the Civil Rights Movement, and it sounds like a three-day carnival," he said. "On day one, Rosa Parks did not give up her seat on the bus. On day two, Martin Luther King led a march in Washington. And on day three, we just changed all the laws."

This definition and chronology of events taught in American history seems to suggest to Americans that the removal of legal barriers directed towards minorities implies equal opportunity. However, according to data published in 2015 by the U.S. News and World Report, African-American children are at far greater risk of living in low-income neighborhoods and therefore attending under-funded schools, setting them back educationally in comparison to their white peers. In addition, despite the national unemployment rate being 5.3 percent, research from the Bureau of Labor Statistics show that the 2015 unemployment rate for African-American and Hispanic/Latino individuals was 9.6 and 6.6 percent, respectively. With this, it is abundantly clear that forms of racism nonetheless persist, and "separate and unequal" unfortunately remains true.

This knowledge invokes important questions: How can individuals glorify their history when it is written in half

truths or neglects to acknowledge important details? Further, how can these individuals be asked to support leaders whose agendas may directly or indirectly propagate their past and present oppression? Finally, and most critically, how can those whose ancestors took part in brutality come to recognize their family's contribution to oppression when the actions of the past are written in a beneficial, prideful lens?

These questions begin to examine the limited nature of the knowledge and experiences of individuals on all sides of history—pre- and post-election. It is not uncommon for those on the left side of the political spectrum to be appalled and upset with the right side in regard to the election results.

The Left statistically has a greater minority following than the Right. The Pew Research Center reports that 87 percent of Black voters and 63 percent of Hispanic voters identified as Democrats in 2016, which explains the disdain. However, while those who have been historically oppressed should never be forced to justify the decisions of those oppressing them, it is important to consider that the majority of people, selfishly or not, make decisions, such as voting, to protect themselves and those they care about. With Democrats

placing the blame of the 2016 election loss in the hands of white, particularly rural Americans, the previously stated misinformation of history becomes critical. If people have been conditioned to believe that their history is the most important, that their ancestors once made this country "great" and generally lack diversity among social groups, their vote will continue to promote such values as a result of their life experiences.

However, it is with this lack of consideration of the trials and life experiences of rural, white America that some individuals on the Left begin to lose sight of how far the boundaries of social justice truly should stretch. While the plight of racial and other minorities has historic, institutional roots that have not been deconstructed, the predicament of those who live in rural America cannot be dismissed. In a 2016 interview with *The American Conservative*, J.D. Vance, author of *Hillbilly Elegy: A Memoir of a Family and Culture in Crisis*, adeptly explains life in these areas:

"What many don't understand is how truly desperate these places are, and we're not talking about small enclaves or a few towns—we're talking about multiple states where a significant chunk of the white working class struggles to get by. Heroin addiction is rampant. In my medium-sized Ohio county last year, deaths from drug addiction outnumbered deaths from natural causes. The average kid will live in multiple homes over the course of her life, experience a constant cycle of growing close to a "stepdad" only to see him walk out on the family, know multiple drug users personally, maybe live in a foster home for

a bit (or at least in the home of an unofficial foster like an aunt or grandparent), watch friends and family get arrested, and on and on. And on top of that is the economic struggle, from the factories shuttering their doors to the Main Streets with nothing but cash-for-gold stores and pawn shops."

Vance's description provides only a small glance into the lives of those affected. Nonetheless, it assists in further understanding what people of rural regions must consider when voting someone into power. Vance goes on to mention the disdain that the working class poor of these areas hold for the "elite" and how that contempt played into political choices. As the minorities who occupy the Left are made inferior to the so-

cietal "elite" due to oppressive structures and systems, the white working-class are held inferior in a different way—in that their values and lifestyle can be scorned without the "elite" appearing racist or xenophobic. The condescension towards these regions essentially made President Donald J. Trump appear relatable, as someone who planned to vouch for rural, white America in comparison to Hillary Clinton, deemed the pinnacle of the elitist Left. This ultimately resulted in a strong base for President Trump in these areas, while

"To be an American is to be proud of what our heritage has led us to achieve, to be grateful for the sacrifices of those who came before us in order to have achieved at all. But what if the accomplishments read and taught about in history books are only part of the story? What if they came at the great expense of the heritage and identities of other Americans?"

it was unclear whether his promises would hold true.

Individuals whose votes resulted in oppression, of themselves or others, should be held accountable if they chose to remain uninformed. Ignorance is not the enemy of the cause, as it implies a level of innocence and a necessity for educational tools. As we progress, the real challenge lies in dismantling personal and collective arrogance, which includes having and/or withholding the resources of proper education and choosing to turn a blind-eye. Socrates was wise in that he was aware that he knew nothing; similarly, it should be assumed that knowledge is not universal and that those with different backgrounds are likely to know varying degrees of history. This disparity results in a need to truly try to understand each other.

In order to avoid the spread of further vicious, undocumented history in the future, those on the Right may need to spend more time in the listening position of dialogue in order to understand past historic events and the impacts they have had and will continue to have on minority groups of the Left today. However, those on the Left should be called to consider and acknowledge the unjust experiences that particular groups of the Right may be facing in the shadows. Going forward, it is only with the recognition of proper historical knowledge and deconstruction of this arrogance, in some cases on both sides, that the achievement of effective, humble dialogue and pursuit of truth can or will ever have a starting point.

RACE: IT'S TIME WE GOT UNCOMFORTABLE

Imani Khan

Freshman

Public Health/Journalism

2016 was a year of various enrollment achievements for Saint Louis University. SLU accepted the most academically gifted freshman class in its entire history and was nationally ranked for economic diversity. According to SLU's freshman class profile, nearly 70 percent of this year's freshmen are out-of-state or international students from over 75 foreign countries, and more than 20 percent of incoming freshmen are receiving need-based grants.

Even with these accomplishments, however, many at SLU are not yet satisfied with the University's progress on enrolling, retaining, and addressing the needs of students of color-- particularly African-American students. According to the Forbes 2016 list of America's Top Colleges, SLU's graduation rate for white students averaged 76 percent, in contrast to an alarming 46 percent for black students.

In the 2015-2016 school year, SLU's student population consisted of 71.1 percent white and 6.0 percent African-American students. This year, enrollment of traditionally underrepresented minority students grew by three percent, with the largest increase among African-American students. Despite these advances, however, SLU continues to be a primarily white institution fenced by low-income, African-American subdivisions.

"It is not a secret that SLU, a predominantly white institution, in terms of population and culture, is surrounded by poor and working-class black neighborhoods," Dr. Stefan Bradley, a SLU Associate Professor of African American Studies with a joint appointment in the

Department of History at SLU, said. "Many of the people from these neighborhoods have the sense that the institution could never be for them. They conclude this from the University's admissions, retention, and outreach." Many students and faculty refer to this alienating dynamic as the "SLU bubble."

"Regarding retention, many of the black students I encounter are good students but need financial aid to pay for school. It has been personally difficult watching academically sound students leave the university because they couldn't afford to stay and the university could not afford to retain them," Bradley said.

Dr. Norman White is the Associate Dean for Community Engagement and an Associate Professor of Criminology and Criminal Justice at SLU.

"We have had a limited number of African-American faculty, and many come and leave within a short period of time. The relationship with students is equally tenuous," White said. "As a result of our approach to recruitment, there exists a tension for the few students who come, as they experience themselves as unwanted outsiders on the campus."

In October 2014, shortly after the birth of the Black Lives Matter movement in nearby Ferguson, demonstrators at SLU's Clock Tower led six days of teach-ins and conversations about racial equity and social justice. They ended with the signing of a 13-point agreement with the University.

The agreement, which has come to be known as the Clock Tower Accords, committed the University to a program of formal and institutionalized conversations about race on SLU's campus and outreach to black students and the surrounding community. President Fred P. Pestello and the University also committed to "devis[ing] short- and long-term initiatives that retain and attract more students and faculty of color, to promote equal opportunity, and to advance focused economic development in disadvantaged neighborhoods."

"One of the things that I like to point out when I discuss Occupy SLU is that the majority of the 'occupiers' were poor black people who could not afford to attend SLU," Bradley said. "They came on campus, disrupted life and culture, and left SLU better for it. When they delivered their demands for more recruitment and retention funds and efforts for black students, they meant students with backgrounds like themselves. When they asked for academic transition programs regarding students from unaccredited mostly-black middle and high schools, they pointed to the need for access to educational institutions like SLU. They asked for those because they knew that people like them were not coming to SLU."

Objectives of the Clock Tower Accords include increasing financial aid resources devoted to the retention of African-American students at SLU, establishing college preparatory workshops, implementing a K-12 bridge program and organizing summer programs in the Normandy and Shaw neighborhoods. These goals aim to increase the number of college-bound students from those areas.

In July 2015, Dr. Jonathan C. Smith was named Special Assistant to the President for Diversity and Community Engagement in direct response to the protests and establishment of the Clock Tower Accords. Smith has been a distinguished faculty member at SLU since 2002, serving as an Assistant Professor in the African American Studies Program.

"For the past two years under Dr. Pestello, there's been a new priority on the quality of the University's relationships with its black student and faculty population. This includes the

classroom, quality life on campus, promotion and retention, etc. We are working to improve our relationships by creating opportunities for broad, effective dialogue between students, faculty, and senior leadership. Before 2014, there was no clear person tasked with diversity. Having this priority is evidence of the University trying to improve," Smith said.

"Within any institution," Smith said, "there always needs to be to dialogue with the constituencies. After a few events created crises last year, we spent some time talking to the Black Student Alliance (BSA) about their needs. Over the summer a larger, more accommodating space was created for the BSA in the Busch Student Center. This was all done in dialogue, instead of solutions handed down from above and outside."

When skimming through SLU's history, you are likely to stumble upon one of the University's most celebrated moments: In 1944, SLU became the first university in Missouri to establish an official policy admitting African-American students. This historic move made Saint Louis University the first university in any of the 14 former slave states to establish an official policy of integration.

"SLU, as an institution, takes pride in the fact that it desegregated in 1944. Each year someone reads Fr. Claude Heithaus's courageous homily in remembrance of the university's bold move. The irony, however, is that no one remembers who the black desegregators were. That sends a message," Bradley said. "Currently, there are many service efforts that students, faculty, and staff are making in the community and that should be celebrated. SLU also has a large presence after expanding greatly in the past 50 years, and shows no signs of stopping. As SLU expands 400 more acres along Grand, many community members are watchful and hoping for a good working relationship."

How do we burst the SLU bubble? White holds that in order to build lasting, empathic relationships between the University and its students of color, SLU "can become honest with itself about how race has mattered on this campus and in this community." To continue healing divides and bridging gaps on campus, the University must cultivate open dialogue among students about the realities of race and the experiences of people of color.

Bradley advises we think of ourselves not just as SLU affiliates, but as neighbors.

"To have a thriving neighborhood, neighbors have to look out for each other. We should continue to try to give as much as we take."

There is no hesitation from Smith as he seamlessly lists ways to pop the SLU bubble. "Do socializing in places where you don't go. I promise you won't get jumped on Grand on a Sunday morning, heading to the black Rock Catholic Church," he smiles. "Stop using terms like 'Shady Shell' or 'Ghetto Schnucks.' There are going to be homeless people in a place like this. Does crime happen there? Yes, but crime happens on campus too. The ways we name people and communities is what makes it different to cross the street. There are so many small mom and pop shops and places to eat here. The bottom line is: Stop being scared of black people. Explore. Go there and see the humanity of those around you."

What more can we do to bridge divides? Smith leans forward. "Proximity. Make boundaries permeable."



Sam Wilson

Sophomore

Psychology

UNDERSTANDING THE DIVIDE BETWEEN LGBT+ AND THE MAJORITY

As LGBTQ+ issues have become increasingly more discussed in our society in recent years, many of us have questioned the relationship between LGBTQ+ students and the cisgendered (a person whose gender identity corresponds with their birth sex) and heterosexual students here at Saint Louis University. With things like “bathroom bills” and marriage equality coming into question, it is easy to see why many believe that our country is drawing proverbial “lines in the sand” between LGBTQ+ people and cisgendered, heterosexual people. Even though SLU prides itself on being an inclusive environment for all students, the positivity of the relationship between LGBTQ+ students and cis/het students can occasionally fluctuate. In order to better explore the relationship between these communities and the way it affects our students, I decided to interview some of SLU’s own, both within the LGBTQ community and the Cisgendered/Heterosexual community (some answers have been edited for length and clarity):

How do you define your gender identity/sexual orientation?

Robert Stark (Freshman): I am a cisgender, bisexual male.

Matthew Graham (Sophomore): I would describe myself as a heterosexual male.

Anonymous Student: Heterosexual

Ricardo Saucedo (Sophomore): I identify as a gay male; I have since the realization at the age of 5.

How do you feel about your identity and being a SLU student?

Stark: I feel very confident. I came from a small catholic high school, so there [are] definitely a few more resources to be found here, and I feel like I was really able to find [my] place both in the SLU community and the LGBTQ+ community here.

Graham: I personally feel my gender identity has nothing to do with me being a SLU student. I am a person like all other students, faculty, administration, and other workers here and as such I am granted the intrinsic rights that all human beings regardless of gender identity, sexual orientation, ethnicity, race, religion, or socioeconomic status are granted. ...I went to an all male Jesuit high school so being around this many girls is certainly a new experience. I’m definitely not saying it’s a bad thing, I’m just saying it’s different is all (but I do believe change/difference is a good thing!).

Anonymous: I really don’t know. I miss my boyfriend when I’m at SLU.

Saucedo: Being a queer individual of color has offered tremendous and life-changing experiences. Everyone is able to find their own niche of friends; however, usually within them is some systemic [sexuality, gender, or race-based] hierarchy.

What is an personal SLU experience related to your identity?

Stark: A SLU experience involving my identity would be joining the LGBTQ+ centered Christian Life Community. It is a mix of two parts of who I am that I have never had the chance to experience with other people before, and I am very happy that SLU has provided the opportunity for me to find that.

Graham: I guess I accidentally touched a bit upon this in my most [previous] answer, but I’ll add that it is refreshing to see more females in my classes. As a math major, I am technically a STEM major which is already male dominant, but especially in math, there are less female math majors compared to other science/technology majors, so the concentration of males in math is even higher. It is definitely and absolutely refreshing and encouraging to see more females in my higher up math classes. I feel like it’s silly to say (in one sense) but I guess there are people out there who don’t think so, but females are just as capable of studying and succeeding in doing hard stuff like Math as males.

(Anonymous elected not to answer)

Saucedo: Being surrounded by primarily white-Anglo queer individuals has been an eye-opening experience in itself. Growing up with a large community of queer POC [people of color], I was shocked to be submerged into a predominantly white-Anglo driven community. As time progresses, there still seems to remain a specific apartheid between minority groups and the predominantly powered community. I’ve learned to maneuver and make by, but it sits deeply with me that queer POC have a silenced voice on this campus - especially since they are the ones apt to greater risks than the one of those in complete control.

Do you feel as though LGBT students and the majority student communities are divided? Why or why not?

Stark: I do not think there is major division between us. Every student at SLU that I have encountered has been very friendly and supportive of the community. There are always the few outliers who are uncomfortable with who we are, but overall, there doesn’t seem to be too much division, which is an amazing thing.

Graham: This one I’m not sure how to answer because all I can do is speculate. If I had some data to look at and interpret I feel like I could provide a much more accurate and helpful answer. But, if you wish to have my speculation here it is: I think it depends on where you look. ... it is important to remember SLU is a predominantly liberal campus and as such LGBT students likely feel more accepted here than say, one would at [Name of university redacted]. Now, I can absolutely not speak for all LGBT students so take this speculation with a big block of salt as I have no data to look at and am not representative of said population, but because SLU is a more liberal campus I believe that not only as I mentioned before about those students feeling more welcome here, but also they are likely to be more represented in all the clubs on campus. ... Now this entire answer is dependent upon how the word “divided” is interpreted (since one could say because I said the LGBT community here is not uniformly distributed across all clubs here, it is divided). When I read this question and saw the word “divided,” I interpreted it as

opposition to having LGBT students as members of said club. Now I could be totally wrong but it seems like here at SLU, that wouldn't be an issue. Like I have said before, this entire answer is just a mere speculation based off intuition as I have had no data to look at and I am not a member of the LGBT community so take what I say with a block of salt. But, that is what under those conditions, I would say.

Anonymous: I think there is a division between LGBT students and majority students. I feel like since SLU is Jesuit and Catholic [university], there's an inherent tension. As an ally I never know how closely a given student aligns to the Catholic view of LGBT persons and I tread carefully. I can only imagine that'd be worse for someone who isn't a heterosexual or an ally.

Saucedo: Virtually, yes. The queer folk stand for the queer folk. The fraternities stand for the sororities. At the end of the day, every SLU student should be empowering and salient toward prejudices against those in their own community. Although not present at most times, I do think there stands an imaginary line between both communities; this line represents a threshold in which we try not to burst, as this would confront and create discussion with the others conflicting views.

What do you think can we do as a SLU community to bridge the gap between these communities?

Stark: I think the only thing we can really do is continue what we have been doing, keep the conversations going, and help everyone be more comfortable with one another.

Graham: This one is also hard to answer but for a different reason. That reason being the answer isn't clear. ... Since I am not in the LGBT community here, I am unaware of what it feels like to be here at SLU and what problems (if any) exist. And also as I said in my previous answer I speculate that the LGBT students and the other students here aren't that divided on the whole. So I guess where improvement could be made between these communities is just better awareness of the needs/concerns of the LGBT community here.

Anonymous: I think it's the simple things. Allies like myself need to be comfortable expressing support especially in the current political climate. Acceptance and love need to be the loudest voice.

Saucedo: Normalize and include queer history as a part of the heteronormative society we live in today. Understanding the history, feeling, and importance of which belies all of queer history is something which should be taken very serious. Acknowledging the self with centuries upon centuries of history will allow for one to not only learn more of one's sexuality, but discover how unruly judgements have been made against normal human beings living within your own community today. Once an understanding of history and fact can be obtained, then there will be progress.

Overall, I was surprised by the variety in the answers I received in these interviews. I personally identify as a queer woman, and I do feel as though the LGBTQ+ community and

the majority community is distinctly divided. Over my last two years here, I have noticed that the two groups tend to not intermingle completely, despite there not being any surface animosity between us. I have always found this to be disconcerting because it is as if we are divided without reason.

Personally, I think this reason is simply due to a lack of understanding. I have never dealt with direct discrimination or hate in regards to my identity, but I have definitely felt the divide between our communities. I am wary of non-LGBTQ students simply because I do not know if they will accept me or if they will treat me with hostility in regards to my sexual identity. My apprehension comes more from unknowns than actual experiences in this regard. However, I also understand why a lack of communication can be the cause here, as well as the fact that all of us are at fault for it. It is not the fault of one particular group. The Cis/Het community may not be aware of LGBTQ+ issues, just as the LGBTQ+ community may not understand the Cis/Het community. However, the deeper issue here is not "why are we divided?"; it is "how can we close this divide?"

In my opinion, which also seems to be reflected in the opinions of my interviewees, both the reason and the solution are related to the communication between our communities. I think that we need to be more willing to start dialogue about LGBTQ+ issues and Cis/Het concerns. It is so important, especially with the current state of affairs in our country, that we open these dialogues and continue them to help the SLU community as a whole to better understand the needs and wants of the LGBTQ+ community and what the Cis/Het community can do to help us. So the solution I offer you is this:

Do more to break out of your complacencies. Engage in these conversations, even if it may be uncomfortable for you. If you are LGBTQ+, work to educate the Cis/Het community on our issues. If you are Cis/Het, do not be afraid to ask questions and communicate your concerns with the LGBTQ+ community. The only way we can progress to a more united SLU community is if we break out of our comfort zones to get to know one another a bit more.

Important terms:

Queer: an umbrella term for those who do not identify as cisgendered or heterosexual

Cisgender (Cis): A person whose gender identity corresponds with the gender they were assigned at birth

Heterosexual (Het): One who is sexually attracted to the opposite sex of their own

LGBTQIA/LGBTQ+: An acronym referring to the community of Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender, Queer, Intersex, and Asexual individuals

Ally: Generally a straight, heterosexual individual who supports the LGBTQ+ community

Proper Language:

Instead of "gay people", "the gays", etc., say "members of the LGBTQ+ community."

"Queer" was originally coined as an anti-LGBTQ+ slur, but has since been reclaimed as an umbrella term by the community.



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